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DARK HORSES.

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I.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF CHALLICE.

UPON rising land above the water-meads of Exe, there stands Merton Magna—a hamlet of such limited dimensions that one might speculate as to the size of Merton Parva, did so tiny a thorpe indeed exist. The church, a sprinkling of thatched cottages and one or two substantial and ancient dwellings within their own walled domains complete this village and a high road runs through the midst, emerging from a network of Devonshire lanes on the one side and disappearing into like dim leafy channels upon the other. Perhaps two hundred persons had sufficed to fill the parish roll, and among these many occupied outlying farms and solitary cottages.

Of the inhabitants five dwelt under one roof beside the lichgate, and Church Cottage was the name of their venerable home. Its eastern wall formed an actual part of the churchyard boundary and from the sole upper window upon that side the graves might be seen in orderly companionship where the families of Merton Magna lay side by side, their friendships ended, their feuds composed, their relationships recorded on slate and stone.

The face of Church Cottage was whitewashed and a silvery thatch extended in thick eaves above the bedroom windows; the woodwork had lately been repainted emerald green and an air of cheerful prosperity marked the old house.

Before it spread a garden bright with knots of spring blossoms, where daffodils and stocks, wall-flowers and primroses at present flourished ; while above the wicket-gate a laburnum and a pink thorn would presently shine together. Behind the house extended a little vegetable patch with a well in the corner of it that had never been known to fail. Above the well there stood a cherry tree already snowed with blossom and musical with honey-bees.

Upon the east of this dwelling rose a little church to its embattled tower and rugged pinnacles. The fabric was grey, enriched with orange-red lichens upon the western wall. They spattered the stonework and shone like gold at sunset-time. A few great conifers shaded the burying ground and southerly the land fell steeply down into open vales, where Exe ran with many a loop and reach and ripple to her estuary, long miles away.

At Church Cottage dwelt Richard Challice. He followed the craft of wheelwright, as his father and grandfather had done before him, and his family consisted of a mother, wife, two sons and a daughter.

Verity Challice, now seventy-eight years old, was not of local stock. Some half-century earlier in her life she had met her son's father, when he came to work at a gipsy camp ; and while engaged upon a broken caravan, in which she dwelt with her parents, Samson Challice had fallen in love with Verity Tarleton and won her. The Tarletons were 'Broom Squires' from Somerset—an ancient, nomad clan, who roamed the heaths and highways in summer and retreated to village homes when winter came. They were indeed camped on Honiton Common when the young pair met, and though a house on anything but wheels had never entered into Verity's calculations, love made the prospect light and she surrendered her gipsy kindred and came to

Merton Magna happily enough. She was eight-and-twenty when she wedded, and at Church Cottage she had dwelt for fifty years, reigned in her husband's lifetime and borne one son. When Samson's days were over and Richard Challice took his place, she dwelt with her boy, watched over him and only yielded her guardianship after Richard married Ivy Southcott, a local woman.

Granny Challice had left the best bedroom when Ivy came and chosen a little chamber on the eastern side of her home. From its window she could see dawn break behind the church tower and look down upon the Challice graves grouped together, not twenty yards from the house in which many of them had lived their lives. There lay the dust of Richard's forbears and stood a white marble slab among the time-eaten grey stones, beneath which lay Verity's husband ; and while she sat at her bedroom window, smoked her pipe and surveyed Samson's sleeping-place, she would often speculate without emotion on the narrowing span of days that now separated her from the destined place at his side.

Ivy was still a pretty woman, blue-eyed and flaxen-haired ; and she took pains with her appearance, which is not a matter that her kind much trouble about after a husband and home of their own are won. But her energies extended not much into her duties. She was a lymphatic, easy-going and gloriously untidy person—a dreamer, who shared her sons' ambitions : to leave the ancient surroundings and seek a new home elsewhere under the conditions of colonial life. If she maintained one steadfast fancy it was that ; and her boys, Leonard and Samson, heartily supported her in this vain vision. Both lads, when upbraided for their slackness, declared that given a new start amid the virgin delights of Australia, or Canada, they would do wonders and even rival

their father's sleepless energy and appetite for hard work. Meantime Samson laboured with Richard Challice at the wheelwright's shop in the village and Leonard worked as an under-gamekeeper upon neighbouring estates. Both lived at home and neither created the least enthusiasm from those set over them ; but they rose to some intensity of feeling in one direction, for they were devoted to each other. They also esteemed their mother, who loved them well enough and declared that none understood their promise save herself. Their grandmother held that Richard's family pulled her son down and entertained no respect for her daughter-in-law, or the young men. Even to the cigarettes that Leonard and Samson smoked she laughed at them—pointed to their father's pipe and her own, declared that not an anodyne, but a tonic was what the slack-twisted couple needed. But they had the laugh at her sometimes, for old Verity was full of folklore and dead wisdom, believing in many things that made a younger generation scoff. She clung to her opinions none the less and found them of stronger support than the school knowledge of a rising generation.

The wife of Richard was fond of ruminating on her troubles, despite their tenuous nature, and chief among the little crosses that marked her even way was her husband's mother. She knew that Richard possessed deep affection for both wife and parent, yet felt it hard that his tendency was ever to feel Verity in the right. She realised that his material interests derived no benefit from her and she regretted that his means were small ; but that troubled her less than Richard's inability to appreciate his sons. His impatience with them struck her as unfatherly, and for her part she considered that the boys were made of finer clay than their father and would prove it if ever opportunity

offered. Richard never grumbled now. He had grown accustomed to Ivy's impassive, untidy manner of life, and the disappointment of finding that both his lads were like her had long been lived down. He still strove to inspire them, yet less strenuously than of yore ; but their lack of aptitude and richness of futile imagination combined to kill hope for either of them. They were a shadowy pair, though not unlovable, and their father often wished that one or both had been girls and his daughter a boy, for she alone echoed him in mind and body and was of the true Chalice breed. He uttered this vain thought to his mother sometimes when he talked to her, but never to his wife. Verity indeed agreed with him.

Verity liked her grandson Leonard the better, because in him she detected a streak of authentic, gipsy blood. Her own son had never revealed a trace of the Tarletons. He was a Chalice to the marrow in his bones ; but Leonard displayed nomad instincts and characteristic traits which, if not admirable in themselves, pleased the old woman by association. He had been a romancer from his childhood and even now, at nineteen years of age, could not be trusted to separate the real and imaginary. When reprov'd in childhood for transparent falsehoods, he showed no shame and explained his weakness without a blush.

'My mind runs away with me, Granny,' he said on one occasion, 'and then I hear things and see things so real that, of course, I believe 'em and tell 'em again.'

He had not quite lost his infantile habits of thought, and Richard often warned him before statements that rang truer than of old, yet contained grave challenges for doubt.

'The trouble with you, Len, is that you've got such a foggy habit of brain you don't know the difference between falsehood and fact—a most untrustable chap ; and some day

you'll get believed when you're lying, or else disbelieved when you're telling truth, and then, either way, ill may overtake you.'

So Richard lectured him; and Leonard would smile as of old and say that his wits were still occasionally apt to run away with him.

His mother rather admired Leonard's inventive powers.

'If he was in another walk of life,' said Ivy, 'he'd turn it to a purpose and tell tales and get paid for doing so, same as men who write stories. Then very like he'd be praised instead of blamed.'

Ethelinda Challice came between her brothers and was a girl of eighteen. She best loved her father and was best understood by him. She had ever been independent and energetic, and since the family circumstances demanded that every member of it must work for a living, the girl had gone into service and brought native good will and good sense to a housemaid's task. For eighteen months she had laboured cheerfully, but now stood to lose her place owing to death and change. Her father felt no regret, for Ethelinda promised to stop at home awhile before seeking a new place. She had worked at one of the private homes in Merton Magna and seen her family every week. At present she was 'walking out' with a desirable wooer, but did not share his deep devotion. He was one John Caryl, her father's head man at the wheelwright's forge—an immensely powerful, red-headed lad of twenty-six years old. He possessed every natural virtue, but was ungifted with any powers of mind or speech. One more silent, save the dumb, never walked this vale. But he was a good listener and most notable confident, for nobody ever heard him repeat anything that he had learned; and some held this to John Caryl's credit, while others declared that

it was vacuity rather than wisdom that made the wheelwright such a drear companion.

The Challices were a personable folk and each one of them could claim some measure of good looks.

Richard himself was typical of the ancient breed—tall, flaxen, Saxon—with blue eyes and corn-coloured hair—the ‘daps’ of his father as Verity always declared. His sons were dark and lightly built like their mother; his daughter was even fairer than himself and of his large-boned and powerful quality. But Ethelinda’s loveliness could not be challenged. Though tall for a woman, she possessed poise and grace, and her complexion and features evinced the distinction of real beauty. Her expression was serene, but something of her capability appeared in it, for her mouth spoke of will; her eyes were steady and her voice clear and determined. She possessed just that element of decision for which character has to be thanked—a gift not to be acquired by taking thought and often patent in a child of five, or as clearly lacking in a man of fifty. She deplored her brothers’ want of purpose and had been glad to go to work, since her mother and she were never on terms of close friendship and understanding.

The demands of his business did not serve to fill all the wheelwright’s time, or occupy more than half his energies at most. He loved toil and was full of expedients for adding to his very moderate means; but the deeds that he could do represented no great return, and he spent much of his leisure in serving his neighbours for nothing. He was an orchard expert and well skilled in fruit-growing; he claimed the right to call himself a bee-master also and understood the craft of the hive. He loved all industries proper to the district and often listened to his mother when she talked of vanished crafts familiar in her early days, but

now grown obsolete. The land itself was Richard's special joy, and if he had an ambition still remaining it centred on the thought of actually possessing a rood or two of his mother country. He would cast his eyes over meadow, woodland, or tilth and speculate as to their possibilities, long to tread them as master, imagine himself as awakening them from their age-old slumbers and realising their promise in his sanguine thoughts.

There was a derelict lime-kiln upon an acre of waste land at Merton which never failed of challenge to Richard. Old Verity could remember when limestone was burned there and the forgotten spot a centre of prosperity, yet her son never succeeded in interesting Merton Magna as to its revival, though he had striven to do so. Now the ground was in the hands of a stranger, and those who knew him assured Challice that the possessor cared nothing for its possibilities.

Another stranded spot also sometimes filled the wheelwright's mind where it stretched in a little vale between the village and the 'Cat and Fiddle' public-house. Here descended an effluent of Exe through marsh lands. It was a boggy region known as Withy Platt—a place once rich in osier beds—and Richard longed to restore its vanished usefulness and plant it again. But he found none to echo these hopeful visions, or supply for any of them the sinews of war. He was a popular man and kindly thought upon by all who knew him, but his dreams found none willing to advance them in the direction of reality. They usually entailed mountains of work, and to shrewder wits than Richard's offered no certainty of any adequate return.

At the 'Cat and Fiddle,' where David Beedell was inn-keeper, and where Challice and his friends were used to end their evenings, younger and astuter men explained that

Richard's ideas belonged to a past period. Mr. Beedell himself illuminated the point.

'What you don't grasp, Dick,' he would say, 'is that new times bring in new manners and customs. To grow withies and burn lime nowadays is out of date. I grant you these things are still done, but they couldn't be revived away from their proper places. To tend Withy Platt and lift it into cultivation might be in the power of a rich man, but never would it pay for an osier bed no more. And as for lime, though we're poor in that respect and I'm so great a believer in it as yourself, yet, along of nitrates and chemistry and such-like, you wouldn't find a market near enough to show you any profits.'

'I'd lead the farmers back to lime,' vowed Richard. 'I'd give it away gratis till their eyes were opened and they found their salvation.'

It was a typical remark, for his dreams were never so much concerned with the wheelwright's personal prosperity as the welfare of the community at large. 'Gratis' was a word very often in Richard's mouth, and those who knew him best not seldom laughed at the contrast between his generous mind and empty pocket.

'Without a doubt,' admitted Mr. Beedell, 'if the good man was rich to-morrow, he'd be poor again the next day.'

There came an evening in early spring when Richard did not go to the inn but smoked his pipe at home with his family and waited to keep an appointment. At nine o'clock he had been bidden to attend at Prospect Place—the uninspired direction of a new dwelling-house half a mile distant from his own; and now his wife speculated as to what this summons might mean.

'Why for should a foreigner like Mr. Pye want you,

Dick ? ' asked Ivy. ' I can't see him calling for any of your feats of cleverness—a town bird like him.'

' I was running it over myself,' he answered. ' But I'm in the dark. It may only be for a bit of information, or again it may be a paid job. He's welcome to anything I can do to serve him naturally. Beedell says he makes a habit of walking to the inn most mornings about noon ; and he'll drink a small beer and smoke his pipe, but don't say much. He's got a friendly disposition, so David Beedell says, and looks at you like a broody hen—quiet and dignified—but keeps his opinions to himself and don't cut into any conversation that may be passing.'

' I often wonder why he came here and built himself that nice house,' said Granny Challice. ' Just for peace and quiet and the view of the river very like. A sign of wisdom in the man.'

' Everything is done very neat and sueant about him,' declared Richard's son, Leonard. ' He's made a flower plot in front and I'll often see him in that planting of apple trees he laid out when he came ; and once—mouching round the old lime-kiln, where I'd set a trap in a rabbit run—I came out on top of him sitting smoking his pipe under the kiln in a lew spot. He told me I was trespassing because the waste land was his ; but he said it quiet like and civil, and I granted he was in the right and promised I wouldn't go there any more. But I do—only stealthier.'

Richard's eyes suddenly shone and hope, ever ready to leap into them, sounded upon his big voice.

' My stars, Mother—what a thing if the gentleman thought to build up the kiln and start the old job ! '

' He'd have come to the right one if he did,' answered Verity ; ' but it's little likely. He goes into Susan Mingo's shop-of-all-sorts now and again, for postage stamps and

sundries, and she tells me that he's a retired shopkeeper and a very gentlemanly kind of man. But he's a foreigner—you've always got to mind that—and he wouldn't venture his savings in the country, nor on no doubtful gamble like the dead kiln.'

'Be it as it will, I'll go and see,' said Dick, 'and, if he gives me half a chance, I'll speak to the virtues of slaked lime.'

Then Samson Challice spoke. He was reading the *Western Morning News*, but put it down and pointed at Leonard.

'You bet he's nosed out one of Len's traps and be going to ask you to put the fear of God in him,' he suggested.

They laughed at the suggestion.

'He'd go to Nick Tidy, not me, if it was that,' answered the father, 'him being village policeman.'

'Poor old Nick,' said Leonard. 'He's like me and Sam—wishful to go to Canada and make a name for himself out there.'

'You'll never make a name worth putting on your grave—in Canada, or anywhere else, Len,' said his grandmother; and they laughed again.

Then Richard took his hat and stick and went to see the foreigner.

## II.

### SIMON PYE MAKES A CHANGE.

Wandering on a lonely holiday, Simon Pye had penetrated East Devon, sat beneath a tree upon a bank to eat his sandwiches, risen to rare heights of imagination and discovered the spot where he would feel well content to end his days. It lay west of Merton Magna, on a bank uplifted over the road, and its first charm consisted of the

view, for beneath, at a distance of no more than two hundred yards, wound the river and stretched wide meadows ablaze with buttercups and sweet with white-thorn that shone above the stream. Red cattle roamed the grasslands and clustered together upon the little beaches of the river; while Exe ran placid and glittering beneath the wanderer's perch and faded away easterly into the misty blue of hills beneath a spring sky.

Here surely, reflected Simon, was such a rural scene as might breed contentment and peace of mind at all seasons of the year. His spirit had been long set on such a spot, but he hoped not much as to its possibilities, because life and experience had alike taught him the futility of taking any mortal thing for granted. He did not even make an extended survey of the lonely dingle and meadow-land behind it, for he judged that in all probability to do so must be waste of time. But the land was certainly private property and he determined to learn as swiftly as possible whether it might lie in his power to secure it.

Simon Pye's story lacked incident and was composed of good and ill fortune, as he held in about the usual proportions. He was a Midland man and had built up a small business in Birmingham. His general store in a poor district proved prosperous and he had worked exceedingly hard to make it. He proceeded on what he believed to be sound lines, gave good value and contented himself with moderate profits. He saved money and, looking forward, always designed to retire and live in the heart of the country when he could afford to do so without care. For many years his wife opposed this ambition and assured him that to cease work would end his interest in life and thereby tend to shorten it. But Simon knew better. He loved the country, always took one fortnight's holiday amid

rural surroundings and understood himself well enough. He rejoiced at all times in reading, and though books did not enter into his business, he was greatly devoted to them and found ample leisure for study. Simon's bent tended towards philosophy, and the circumstances of his private life turned his attention more and more in that direction, because philosophy helped him in the difficulties created by a partner out of sympathy with his character and impatient of his colourless and concentrated existence. She was a Birmingham woman blessed with a little fortune of her own, and she had married Mr. Pye for more reasons than one. She admired his quality, so different from her own, and always counted on enlarging his interests and enjoying life in her own gay fashion after marriage; but he proved obstinate, demanded utmost simplicity of life and declined to modify his own monotonous methods on her account. At her entreaty he tried the livelier side of their social order and once spent his fortnight's holiday in the Riviera to pleasure her; but he loathed this jaunt and returned with thankfulness to his business and his books. He was forty when he married and his wife ten years younger. One child they had—a son—and in after time Nora Pye confessed to her intimates that the baby alone served to save the situation and anchor her in her husband's home. She was faithful to him, but they lived their lives much apart and never took their holidays together. Simon strove to bring up the boy according to his ideals; but his mother opposed the father's methods, adored the handsome child and spoiled him. In youth little Gerald had been fascinating and original. He was a show child and knew it at an early age. Money went to his education and from a preparatory school he proceeded to Rugby. His mother gloried in him; his father mourned to see no distinguishing trait of

promise in the lad. His mother dreamed of him going upon the stage, for Gerald possessed facial distinction and ample confidence ; but his father very well knew that only discipline and hard work would ever enable Gerald to justify his existence. Had the young man's destiny rested with Simon, he had certainly striven to save him, but as long as his mother lived, the youth danced attendance upon her and wasted his time in empty amusement. His education was wasted and he revealed no inclination to a profession, or the least interest in his father's business.

Then, when the lad was twenty, his mother had died in a motor accident, and the unexpected disaster steadied him for a while. Simon sorrowed but reflected that Nora had enjoyed her days in her own fashion, and though he himself could not satisfy her, he had ever been generous with his money, and added what she desired to her own good means. It had been understood that he would leave her all his money, for there were no other calls upon him, and she had told him that her fortune would be his were she the first to die. With respect to his son, therefore, Simon felt that his mother's untimely end might prove a blessing in disguise, and he designed henceforth to make Gerald his prime thought and care. The event fell otherwise and furnished another illustration of the illusory pleasures of hope. Nora, moved thereto by some experience that had angered her in the past, or possibly convinced that her son, if ever in his father's power, would be faced with conditions unworthy of him, died leaving Gerald her entire fortune when he came of age. Simon had never touched a penny of it, and though his wife from time to time lessened her capital, a substantial sum remained. Within six months of his mother's passing Gerald Pye inherited five hundred pounds a year. Some prevenience, or a lawyer's advice,

had, moreover, brought caution into Nora's will and her son might not touch his capital until attaining the age of thirty. Thus was young Pye independent of Simon and his father's hoped-for control did not exist.

The boy lived at home for a time until he felt his feet, but it was not long before he tasted the pleasures of independence.

Gerald at four-and-twenty might have been cited as the absolute antithesis of his father in every mental and physical particular. He was sociable, vain of unusual good looks, inherently idle and a lover of pleasure. For the most part he looked on at life, because any sort of respectable success demanded the hard work he was not prepared to do ; but he soon discovered a sort of occupation which combined business with pleasure. He loved horse-racing and would take great pains to master the intricacies of the sport with purpose to profit by it. Easy money could be made there as well as lost, and though Gerald had his social ambitions and would not become a bookmaker, he called himself 'a gentleman backer' and in that capacity devoted immense natural energy to a sort of life his father loathed. Simon Pye held gambling the most futile of all vices and had never seen a horse-race in his life. But racing was in the young man's blood—ironically through his father ; for Simon's own parent had been a bookmaker by profession and a highly reputable and honest man in the days when Fred Archer and George Fordham rode.

The Pyes had long drifted apart when Simon ate his sandwiches, sat above Exe and gazed solemnly upon her beauties. He was a rather undersized and unattractive man and his clean-cut and clean-shorn features had grown a little coarse with age ; but his eyes were brown, intelligent and kindly, his forehead broad rather than high, his hair

thick and iron grey. In two years he contemplated retirement, designed to leave his old home and few acquaintances and bury himself in the country. He had long determined upon Devonshire, but as yet, amid the wealth of the West Country's attractions, still remained uncertain. Nor did he propose to build. His dream was some ancient dwelling : yet now, before this challenge, Simon reached as nearly as possible to moments of excitement and he pictured a bungalow upon the knoll, within sound of the river's summer murmurs and winter shouting.

Chance favoured him and, much to his own surprise, there presently appeared a landowner who proved extremely willing to sell some acres of unprofitable earth at a modest figure. Mr. Pye acquired the knoll, a little meadow situate behind it and jungle grown up around the picturesque ruins of the lime-kiln at his rear. He proceeded with good sense and consideration for the surroundings. An artist designed his dwelling of one storey and created a commodious and modest home built of local iron-stone under weathered tiles that offered no outrage to the surrounding scene. Every tree that could be spared stood round about ; the bungalow faced south and beneath it spread those river reaches that rejoiced Simon with their flower-girt peace. Meantime, while his house was abuilding, Simon disposed of his business, and presently took a cottage in Merton Magna and engaged a mother and daughter to attend upon him until his new home should be prepared. He enjoyed the intermediate period much, came and went daily and turned his special attention to the meadow, which was to be transformed into an apple orchard. Mr. Pye never trusted his own scanty understanding of agriculture and in the matter of his young fruit trees had received expert advice and bought a stock of three hundred plants from the

great nurseries in Jersey. Very admirable supplies were forthcoming and he set them up, in hope soon to see the blooth of spring and the harvests of autumn. He had handed their charge and care to a veteran of the village—an ancient man judged to know more about apples than any within the scope of the parish; and now, after two years in companionship with his youthful trees, Simon's heart began to faint and doubt grew massively within it. Under Matthew Sloggett's ministry the apples appeared to lack both heart and vigour in their master's eyes. Though apparently healthy enough, they evinced no desire to get on with the business of growth and not the least anxiety to flower or fruit. He grumbled mildly and was surprised to find that no friendship existed between Mr. Sloggett and his charges. Old Matthew did not like these particular apple trees; indeed, he revealed an inveterate distrust of their promise. The grotesque reason for this aversion presently appeared; but not until Simon had set about to make a change, seek another and a younger man for the laggard orchard and send Matthew Sloggett about his business. Mr. Pye was always deliberate and cautious, and he did not dismiss the ancient man until he had made enquiries and learned of a more promising substitute. He would often go into Susan Mingo's little shop, and it was Susan who had first mentioned Richard Challice to him. Thereupon he investigated the accomplishments of Richard and learned from David Beedell, at the 'Cat and Fiddle,' that Dick invariably won first prizes at the village flower show with his 'Cornish Gilliflowers'—a shy bearer but a noble fruit. So he determined to approach the wheelwright at his forge.

But, when the time came, Simon changed his mind as to a detail and summoned Challice to 'Prospect Place'

instead. He left nothing to chance and desired to avoid any unpleasant clash. He had therefore arranged to see and part from Matthew Sloggett at eight o'clock, and when the unprofitable servant had gone his way, to proceed with the engagement of Mr. Challice an hour later.

The evening came and the men were punctual. Richard, of course, knew nothing as to what might await him, but Matthew entertained grim suspicions that trouble brewed and came in a humour somewhat dour to face it. He did not like his employer and held that Simon lacked both faith in his powers and adequate respect for a man so much older than himself. For Sloggett demanded and expected the deference due to age, though in truth his parts were not such as to invite it. He knew Simon for one much given to books—an attitude that awakened uneasiness combined with contempt, for Matthew held books in no respect, declaring that experience and not learning was the criterion of success upon the land. He thought Simon a hard man and distrusted both him and his apple trees—for one paramount reason that now appeared.

Mr. Pye sat in his veranda smoking a pipe and gazing upon the twilight, as it began to dim the river's reaches and waken a silver fog above the leas. Then came Sloggett, and he was invited to sit down and listen to the reason of his visit. The younger opened with a generalisation. He felt not afraid of Matthew as many did, but knew him for one of small intelligence and crabbed temper; therefore he planned to be gentle and put him to no needless pain. Simon lacked much understanding as yet of the rustic mind and sometimes discovered that he had hurt when least disposed to do so. The folk would prove callous when he expected them to be touchy and reveal strange sensitiveness for most unexpected reasons.

'Smoke your pipe and take it easy, Matthew,' directed the younger. 'Now it's a sure thing that knowledge often defeats its object, and I've found it work that way with me in many more important matters than apple trees. In a word, the more you think you know about a subject, the less you often really do know. Ever noticed that?'

This was just the sort of vague remark that Sloggett specially detested. He did not understand it and only grunted.

'We're a bit too fond of saying a thing can't happen, because we've never seen it happen,' continued Mr. Pye. 'We think we've got the whole law and the prophets about some matter when, in truth, we have everything still to learn. I make that mistake often, though old enough to know better; so do you. Yet I've lived to see things happen that I'd have laughed to scorn in my youth, and so have you. You're great on experience, but it's foolish to pit your experience against that of everybody else, because experience is not only a matter of age as you seem to think. It's a matter of brain-power, Matthew, and men like you and me, with very moderate brain-power, may get less live, working experience in a hundred years than a brighter brain will collect in fifty. You'd say that was fair—come now?'

The old man grunted again, but Simon still delayed to reach the point. An idea had struck him and he voiced it.

'Modern inventions make me feel tender to the ancient beliefs,' he said. 'I mean the folklore and old sayings and old charms that I dig out of ancient folk when I give 'em the time of day on my walks abroad. You ask what I mean by that? Well, suppose I'd been able to tell my grandfather, as I sat upon his knee, that a time was coming when the King's voice would echo note for note round the world, what would he have done?'

'Had the doctor to you,' said Mr. Sloggett.

'Exactly. And so I never laugh at the old wisdom, or undervalue it; but there's the new wisdom to be taken into account also.'

'I know what I know, and that's enough for me,' said Matthew.

The opening was too good to ignore and Mr. Pye struck.

'But it isn't enough for me, I'm afraid. I don't question it for a minute. You were looking after apple trees before I was born, no doubt. But nothing stands still—at least nothing ought to stand still, my friend—and the trouble with my orchard—so to call it—is just that: the trees are standing still. So I want to try a bit of new wisdom and find somebody who knows more about 'em than you do.'

The old man glared and his head began violently to nod. At last he spoke.

'Somebody who knoweth more about apple trees than me! Hell, Master, where is he?'

'I've found him—at least I hope I've found him—a younger man with a pinch of the new wisdom.'

Mr. Sloggett received five shillings a week for his services at Prospect Place and had done so during two years. He prepared to make a fight for it.

'Give heed to me,' he said, and put his ancient paw upon Simon's knee. 'Give heed to what I tell you for God's love, else you'll go from weakness to weakness and never live to see the orchard you hanker after. It ain't the soil, nor yet the lay-out, nor yet the weather that's in fault to your plot: it's the trees! Long, long I've known where the mischief was, yet couldn't bring myself to tell you; and I've fought for them saplings and sweated for 'em and layed awake by night for 'em days beyond count. For who was I to break it to you, after you'd spent big money

on hundreds of the damn' things, that you might so soon have sunk it in the river ?'

'The trees are the cream of a famous Jersey nursery—a world-renowned nursery, my dear fellow,' explained Mr. Pye, and the other's voice lifted in triumph.

'There you are then ! Jersey ! Foreign—God He knows where—and if there's one thing is vain on our lands it's what come foreign. They may be so world-renowned as you say ; but what's that to our red earth ? Our red earth is world-renowned for wheat and roots and such-like, and no such things be denied by us ; but apples and pears—no ! Devon apples and pears are all we've got a use for here, and where shall you see their partners outside of the county ? But they must be born and bred here and come from the generations and generations that have made us what we are. And when I heard the fatal news that they was foreigners you'd planted in the old ewe-lease, then you could have knocked me down with a feather, Master, because I knew the end from the beginning. But with death in my heart I went at 'em—you'll bear me out there. I've fought for 'em like a father for his childer.'

'I've never seen you fighting very hard,' murmured Simon, his eyes on a lilac light fading over the river. 'However, the past is past and the trees don't look unhealthy in my eyes—merely sulky and down on their luck.'

'They're so healthy as they can be in our climate—thanks to me,' answered Sloggett, 'but they're home-sick. They're foreigners I tell 'e.'

'I'm a foreigner myself, but I'm not home-sick,' replied Simon thoughtfully. 'You see if you were right, Matthew, the only proper course would be to scrap the lot and make a fresh start.'

'If you've got the pluck and money to do it. And I

pray you may have before I'm grown too old to help you, Master.'

'No—they must get another chance. We'll try the new wisdom and see if that's going to save them. I dare say you'll come along sometimes and lend a hand when you can spare the time and keep my little flower garden smart and trim; but the orchard will be in other hands after Lady Day, Matthew.'

The old man rose.

'Then I'll wish you good night,' he said. 'I don't come round here playing at work under some fool young enough to be my grandson. I'll quit at once if you please.'

Mr. Pye looked at his watch. It yet wanted a quarter of an hour before Richard Challice was due and he knew that Sloggett's home lay in the other direction.

'Well, good night, and we'll be friends still, I hope.'

Matthew made a vulgar sound.

'Friendship is as friendship does,' he said, 'and foreigners is as foreigners does seemingly.'

With this stroke he stumped away into the dusk. Then for a time silence reigned in the thickening gloom. A corncrake broke it harshly from the hayfields beneath; a star shone; a salmon splashed in the river.

It grew chilly and Mr. Pye went indoors, turned up his oil lamp and waited for Challice. He was reading when the visitor arrived and stood for the first time in a chamber lined with book-shelves. Richard's eyes opened wide with wonder to see their massed battalions and he voiced surprise in his direct fashion.

'My, sir!' he said. 'Didn't know there was such a lot of books in Merton Magna!'

'You're welcome to borrow when you please if you like reading,' answered Simon. 'I haven't read 'em all myself

yet, but there's more to them than the newspaper in my experience. Sit down.'

He described his need.

'Have you ever cast your eye over my plantation of apple trees, Challice?' he began.

'I have, sir. Apples is my hobby in a manner of speaking and I grow a few in my little plot. It holds seven cordon trees.'

'They tell me that you always get first prize for your fruit.'

'I've been lucky, Master. Not much competition in our little show.'

'And what did you think of my trees?'

'They are very nice, stuggy young trees—just what I'd choose for planting myself—good stuff and full of vigour; but—well, I don't want to say a word against old Matthew, you understand, because you trust the trees to him.'

'Never mind him, Challice.'

'He's known for a very understanding man and he counts you for a tower of strength, of course; but I'd say, without a slur on Sloggett, that he might be a thought behind the times—natural at his age.'

'He left me before you came,' said Mr. Pye.

'I passed him up-along, Master.'

'Just what I didn't want to happen. I thought he lived the other way.'

'He does so,' admitted Richard, 'but he was going to the pub. no doubt. He was chattering to himself; and when he chitters, you know he's troubled. He didn't mark me.'

'He's gone to tell his friends that I'm a scoundrel, I expect,' said Simon.

'Never, Master!'

'Well, I'm a foreigner, and that's very near as bad in Sloggett's opinion. How long do you need to stop in a place before you cease to be a foreigner, Challice?'

The wheelwright laughed.

'You'd want to bide here for a generation or two before you was counted anything else,' he explained. 'The young folk would know you from their cradlehood and you'd be a common object of the countryside to them, sir; but a foreigner to the rest.'

'Very interesting. I must support it as best I can. And now be frank about my trees. I may tell you that Matthew has given up all hope.'

'Why? Why does he say that?'

'They are foreigners—wandering, way-lost creatures in a strange land and climate, and therefore doomed to failure.'

Richard roared loudly. 'You don't ordain to let him hold down his job?'

'For the sound reason that he can't. I never denied him anything and he's doomed the trees from the first apparently and not stirred a finger to them, and waited to see 'em die, and taken five shillings a week for his fun. He's gone. I offered him lighter work—to look after the flower garden and keep me tidy. He won't take that. He was rude. I'm sorry, but so it is. He ought to retire and rest on his faded laurels. Will you come for five shillings a week? And if the trees are shouting for food, they'd better have it at once. I'll pay for what labour you want.'

'I'll come gladly,' replied Richard. 'But there's lots to do before the feeding. Too late for that now till autumn. Then I'll dress 'em proper. I'll start with the wire so soon as you're pleased to order it.'

'You can order it and get a spot of commission,' declared

Simon. 'I'm going to trust you entirely. I've found in my life that we can trust people more than we're apt to do.'

'I'd say we was mostly trustable round these parts,' answered Richard. 'And that's how I feel about your trees at the minute, Master. Now I'll go over 'em, as a paid servant to 'em, and report what I pick up at close study. But a child could see they were hearty, healthy young stuff. If you never touched 'em they'd make good on their own in twenty years' time; but, of course, you want to get a move on to 'em.'

He rose to go, but Mr. Pye rather liked Richard and bade him sit down again.

'We'll drink on it,' he answered. 'Now tell me about yourself and your business. Very interesting work?'

Richard expanded under this friendly greeting. He joined Simon in some whiskey and water and detailed his craft and his family history, while Simon listened and encouraged him until the visitor became quite confidential. Indeed, Challice felt no less trust in his fellow-men than Mr. Pye himself professed.

'I always thought how wonderful to have a few acres of ground of your very own and still think so,' he said.

'A common hunger in some countries,' explained Simon. 'In France, for instance. They tell me that the country people there love a bit of land better than their souls. But you don't find it in England so much. Our system's different and the folk aren't brought up to own, so they seldom dream of doing so.'

'I do,' confessed Richard. 'It always seems to me a most wonderful thing, Master.'

'So it seemed to me—till I got a few acres,' answered the other, 'then it wasn't wonderful at all.'

'My sons are all for leaving England and taking up virgin

land and building a property at the ends of the earth ; but that ain't for them, and I doubt if they'd shine at such tremendous hard work even did the chance come.'

'Young men dream dreams and see visions,' replied Simon. 'There's another side to pioneers' work, however. I know, because I was a pioneer myself—not in virgin forests, but a Birmingham back street. To make something out of nothing wants staying-power, Challice, and good health before all else.'

'One of my boys dreams dreams and sees visions,' declared Richard, who had been caught by the phrase ; 'but they don't get him forwarder.'

'I suppose not.'

Presently the wheelwright spoke of Mr. Pye's ruined lime-kiln.

'I thought when it went round you'd bought the rough copse and the old kiln, that you might be minded to burn lime, sir,' he said. 'There's a shining prospect there for any who'd face up to it.'

'No, I don't think to do that. The rough ground ended off my acres and I liked the look of it. I was and am very ignorant about wild nature and I thought a place like that would teach me a lot. And it has for that matter. But I'm rather tired of nature now. Things must be robbing and killing each other all the time, and you hear birds and beasts screaming by night. Not nice, that.'

Richard stared. Such familiar experiences had never troubled him.

'Coming from a town, I dare say you found matters to jar you till you were used to them,' he said.

'As you would, if you went to a town. But reading quiets the mind and calms it down. I'm very interested in what I hear round about, because in a place like this you

feel nearer to the peace and quiet of the past than you can in a city, where the present is always banging at your door with all its new inventions.'

Richard felt inspired with an idea.

'I do believe that you'd win a bit of pleasure out of my old mother, sir,' he said. 'She's gipsy born, but she's lived in our old cottage for half a century and is full of old-world stuff. Her memory's clear yet and she's a most downright old woman and smokes a pipe.'

'Sounds my sort,' said Mr. Pye. 'I've heard of her for that matter from Miss Mingo at the shop.'

'If you was to do her the honour of paying her a visit some day, you'd see if Mother took your fancy,' suggested Richard. 'You mightn't like her perhaps. A plenty don't, along of her directness of speech, but she knows scores of funny old stories and happenings, when the people held to a lot more than they hold to now.'

'I'll come and smoke a pipe with her one afternoon,' promised Simon. 'Such things are worth noting down if you're serious-minded, else when the old intelligencers drop out, they'll be lost for all time.'

They talked a little longer and then the visitor bade Mr. Pye 'good night' and went on his way elated. He had won the promise of an amiable employer disposed to friendship, and friendship in any sort always found him quick to welcome it.

### III.

#### SHOP-OF-ALL-SORTS.

Susan Mingo was a survival from a vanishing day, yet knew it not, for, by a blessing of nature, no warning instinct exists to toll the melancholy fact into any of our ears. Life flowed on and the business of the post office and her little

store flowed with it. Her father had administered his dual task with dignity and success, and she followed in his footsteps. She could hear him now singing 'Hark, hark the lark !' as he tripped from one side of his establishment to the other ; and sometimes, though he had been dead ten years, she came upon his writing on card-board boxes and sighed a little. She liked to think his ghost was at her right hand still, as she had been at his when he taught her to telegraph and sell stamps, and it seemed to her on quiet days, when nothing much was doing, that she could still hear 'Hark, hark the lark !' booming down thinly from that exalted place where doubtless now he still sang it at his celestial tasks.

One side of Miss Mingo's shop was sacred to affairs of state and, as she said, you could smell post office instantly the moment you turned your nose in that direction ; but the limitations of the establishment were such that less austere odours were apt to drift through the intervening atmosphere and sully the subtler aroma diffused by stamps and official literature. Miss Mingo's pride was to stock nothing that could possibly languish or go shop-soiled on her hands. A lifetime of experience had taught her what to avoid, and though her instincts often tempted her, she seldom fell. Even at Christmas-time she laid in little that was merely meretricious, or unlikely to go off. She respected the seasons and prepared for each in turn. Nor were the lighter festivities of the passing year neglected. Masks and squibs and crackers appeared on the last days of October ; and on May Day she blossomed with attractive draperies.

But the backbone of the emporium was food, and since the taste of the folk in food changes not, everything quite sure to be demanded awaited the customer. Such material was treated with utmost respect, protected, carefully guarded

against contamination, set as far from the ironmongery and drapery as possible, shrouded alike from the public gaze and the village flies of summer. Her tortoise-shell cat controlled this department by night and slept in the midst of it by day. Miss Mingo had known as many as four dead mice awaiting her inspection of a morning sometimes, and would laud the slayer when he lifted his green eyes for applause.

Into the shop one afternoon came Ivy Challice to buy her son, Leonard, a pair of socks, and her son, Samson, a pair of braces. The purchases were swiftly made, but Ivy stopped to talk. She was rather elated at an event of the immediate future and, though usually impassive and unemotional to a curious degree, could waken up if interested.

'Mr. Pye's coming to have a tell with Granny Challice this afternoon,' she said. 'He's took to Dick and he's never seen a woman smoke a pipe and be very wishful to do so. All for new experiences, Mr. Pye is; and when he hears tell of anything, he sets it down in a little pocket-book.'

Susan was grey and birdlike, weak-eyed, gentle-voiced and apt for laughter.

'The only dark thing about Verity Challice is her pipe,' she said. 'For sense there never was such another. And Mr. Pye's a very nice man indeed, Ivy. He'll often come in for this or that and pass the time of day.'

She laughed at a recollection.

'Gave me a lot of clever hints he did and praised my place. Said he was in much the same line of business himself, only on a larger scale. First time he came in was for a black-lead. And I rummaged 'em out and caught sight of my dear father's writing on the old box and went fainty. Though it's all these years and years since he went on, I still go fainty when I come on his writing.'

'Fancy !' said Mrs. Challice.

'Yes, and I had to sit down and hold my heart, and Mr. Pye asked what was wrong and I told him, and he was most understanding and said a good father was a blessed memory, and waited for me to get right.'

As she spoke Simon Pye himself entered. He already knew them both.

'I'll trouble you for some matches, Miss Mingo,' he said, 'and I wish you sold tobacco. I've been buying some first-rate Virginian for Mr. Challice's mother and I had to go down to the "Cat and Fiddle" for it.'

Susan laughed.

'Mr. Beedell would never forgive me, sir, if I was to store tobacco. Live and let live's our motto.'

'There are few practise that good old saying now,' he answered, and gazed about him. 'You've taken my advice over the bacon and butter, I see. Find it work easier for you ?'

'I do, sir. 'Tis a lot more successful,' acknowledged Susan.

'Wonderful shop,' he said, 'a lesson in using space.'

'Vicar was in but this morning,' answered the little merchant. 'Wanted a pair of brown shoe-laces and a quick-death mousetrap. Doubted I'd have 'em, but I had 'em both ! "Most compendious, most compendious, Miss Mingo," he said to me, and I thanked him, but didn't know the use of the word. What might it mean, sir ?'

'Much in little,' answered Simon, 'a very good name for your shop.'

Susan made a confession.

'Not but what I'd hanker for more room sometimes,' she told him. 'Off and on, when I sit in the church, I picture a shop laid out there, like they Stores to Redchester city, and,

God forgive me, my mind roams over the aisles and I see a proper emporium and fill the pews with dry goods on one side and wet goods t'other and hardware down the middle. But one didn't ought to bring business into worship and I feel shame afterwards.'

Simon departed and Susan praised him.

'He don't look a kindly man,' said Ivy, 'but Dick says that frown on his face and his underhung jaw means no light on his character. He's mild at heart and not very much of a fighter by his nature.'

'You trust Granny to size him up,' answered Susan. 'Along of her long life she's got a great judgment for any person's character.'

'She's got a great art to see the worst of 'em,' answered Mrs. Challice. 'A most impatient woman, I'd say. Never understood me, nor yet my sons. But we bend to the blast—for my husband's sake. He sets a lot of store by her. A carping old woman. I never can see what he sees in her.'

'She's downright,' said Miss Mingo. 'For downrightness you won't find her equal.'

'You can be a lot too downright,' explained Ivy. 'She don't hurt me, because I let her talk flow in one ear and out the other; but she'll make my sons smart sometimes. She hasn't got no sympathy with their opinions and their cleverness to want a bigger life and go foreign.'

Meantime Mr. Pye proceeded to Church Cottage and, as he went, ran into old Sloggett. They had not met since Matthew's dismissal and he scowled under his wrinkled forehead and was stumping by. But he carried something very unusual and Simon, always a learner, ventured to ask the reason.

'Good afternoon, Matt.,' he said amiably enough. 'And what have you there?'

Matthew was bearing a big black toad in an old bird cage. He hesitated, but declined any information.

'Tis my affair—you wouldn't understand,' was all he answered; while Mr. Pye gazed thoughtfully after him.

'No doubt that toad is going to be put to some purpose,' he reflected, and presently, when he sat with old Verity Challice, raised the question.

She herself came to the door at his knock, for she was alone in the house. But she had made ready for the occasion and donned her best gown, her agate brooch and her golden gipsy earrings. Her scanty hair was covered by a black indoor bonnet, and she wore three odd old rings upon her fingers as well as her wedding ring.

Simon spoke on general subjects after praising Richard and declaring his enjoyment at the wheelwright's energy.

'A very fine man, your son, Mrs. Challice,' he said. 'I know work when I see it and like to watch him. He'll do more in an evening hour than many of the young fellows can tackle in a day.'

'Yes, that's true; and you want for to see me smoke my pipe, so I will smoke my pipe,' she answered. ''Tis loaded ready.'

Simon listened with good appetite and Verity, elated at such unusual attention, forgot all about her pipe. But presently the visitor raised a personal question and expressed a hope that Mrs. Challice might help him in the matter of a maid.

'My housekeeper's stopping,' he said, 'only her girl is to be married and leave me. I want somebody to be described as house and parlour maid under the command of Mrs. Butters. She won't have to do any cooking.'

Verity reflected.

'I'd pleasure Mary Bidlake for her mother's sake, though

not particularly for her own,' she answered. 'She hasn't seen service, but her mother's a widow with six and very wishful to get Mary off her hands. You find yourself like that sometimes—willing to advance somebody you don't like for the sake of somebody you do like.'

'What's wrong with the girl?'

'She's pretty to look at and as sly as a fitch.<sup>1</sup> Comely to the eye and pleasing to the ear, but full of craft. The sort of maid would listen at keyholes and look at private letters.'

'I see—just ordinary,' said Simon, who was cynical as to feminine curiosity, 'but I wouldn't choose her, ma'am.'

'You lose your trust in the young as you get well forward in the seventies,' confessed Verity. 'I may be hard on Mary, though I've got her own mother's word that she's downy and given to secrets. I wonder how you'd like my granddaughter, Dick's girl. She's a professed housemaid and only leaving the Wilderness House because the general's dead and for no fault. It would be a masterpiece of convenience for Linda if you saw your way to her, because then she'd keep close to me and her father. It ain't for me to push her on to you, but you could ask her mistress as to her character, sir. Nothing nosy about Linda. A good, fearless piece and a towser for work.'

'Just the right one by the sound of her—if your son would like it.'

'He'd like it, and another would like it. That's Dick's man, John Caryl. He's by way of courting Linda and a faithful fashion of man; but you needn't be afraid she'll take him and leave you to want another, because I happen to know under the rose she never will take him.'

'If she's got your son's cheerful qualities and wouldn't think my home too small after a grander sort of place,

<sup>1</sup> Fitch: Weasel.

I doubt not I should be glad to have her,' answered Simon.

Thus two kindly people in sublime ignorance sealed the fate of Ethelinda Challice and, all unwitting, spread a future bed of thorns for that happy young woman.

Mr. Pye agreed to see the girl and her grandmother was quietly gratified.

'They think I'm past my usefulness,' she said, 'but, when they hear tell about this stroke for the family, they'll know different.'

#### IV.

##### THE GIFT.

Mr. Pye approved of Ethelinda, though he felt some measure of uneasiness at employing such a remarkably handsome young woman; but what was more important, she approved of him and only went in doubt concerning her wages. He suggested forty-five pounds a year, and as this was five pounds more than she had ever earned, Linda accepted the terms. Her father had sung Simon's praises very heartily, and though she knew that Richard's enthusiasms were apt to end in disappointment, she felt no fears and presently went to her new task happily enough. It was a lighter place than the last and she found agreeable leisure to spend for the most part with her family. Granny Challice had received her meed of applause and learned through Dick that Mr. Pye was grateful to her for her suggestion. Perhaps only Linda's mother felt secretly not satisfied. She well knew the girl for a beauty, and though Linda looked not far ahead, Ivy was wont to dream of the possibilities attaching to her daughter's unusual gifts. Romantic in her cold-blooded way, Mrs. Challice had hoped

that the girl might find her next employment at the neighbour city, and there come into touch with a prosperous suitor and a good match. She felt that if properly managed, Linda might well make some sensation and deplored the fact that she seemed so indifferent to her own promise. For the young woman was not ambitious and not vain. Her father represented her first interest. Indeed, she was old-fashioned in her affections and as yet the thought of marriage had not troubled her. She knew many young men, but none awakened more than friendly interest. Best indeed she liked John Caryl, because Richard Challice thought very well of him; but while satisfied with his attentions and his attitude to life, she found him awaken no tender thought and was at this moment considering how best to let John know he wasted his time. Hints were utterly thrown away on him, and Linda began to fear the approaching task would need to be entrusted to her father.

Granny Challice abounded in surprising utterances and there came a day when she announced a wish that astonished her family. She had hoped that Mr. Pye would soon return 'for a tell,' but as yet he had made no effort in that direction, being engaged about his affairs and rejoicing in solitary tramps through the days of another June. Now the old woman desired his company again and told Richard that he must come.

'Ask the man to tea and be done with it,' she said. 'I like him and he likes me—you always know if anybody likes you, because it happens so seldom. Tell him I'm wishful for him to drink a dish of tea along with me. He can but say "no."'

'He'll think you're cadging for another tin of tobacco,' suggested Leonard Challice. 'You're a deep one, Granny, and no doubt he found that out.'

'No, he won't,' she answered; 'he ain't like you, Len. He's straight, and he very well knows I'm straight. Shop people and gipsies always know who they can do and who they can't do. It's their business to try it on. But you can't do Mr. Pye.'

'He'd come without a doubt, Mother,' said Richard, 'but he might reckon it was taking advantage of him.'

'Why?' asked Verity.

'I couldn't tell you for why,' he answered, 'but—class is class.'

'He's gentry,' suggested Samson Challice.

'Oh no, he isn't,' explained Ivy. 'He's a retired shop-keeper. Only that. He told Susan Mingo he'd kept a shop himself same as hers, only bigger.'

'He's not gentry nor nothing like 'em,' admitted Verity, 'but he's a gentleman. You can be the gentry and not a gentleman by a long shot. He's just a gentleman, so all's said as to that. He don't pretend nothing, and if you don't pretend nothing, then you're a gentleman.'

They questioned this definition and argued the point, but Granny Challice was insistent and Richard at length promised to invite Mr. Pye to tea.

'Let the man name his own day,' said Verity, 'then he can't get out of it. Not that he'll want to do anything like that. I've got a dollop of stories for him and he'll take it kindly you'll find.'

The invitation was duly given and Simon made no trouble about accepting it. Indeed, he declared himself much gratified and named a day, but told Richard that any other would suit him equally well. He came and they found him amiable and interested in their experiences. He praised Ethelinda to Ivy and vowed that he had not oftener seen a prettier girl. He ate heartily of the meal provided, applauded

the cake and asked questions concerning the butter, which he found better than his own.

Simon went a little lame, for he had twisted his ankle getting over the 'Ghost Stile' by the river, and Verity, on hearing of the accident, was able to tell him of a certain cure.

'The hand of a new-born babe will heal a sprain instanter,' she said.

Presently the visitor questioned Leonard as to his interests ; but could not get much out of him, for he was very shy.

'He's like me, sir,' said Ivy, 'most wishful to go foreign. We feel a call that way, me and my sons ; but of course it can't be, because Dick couldn't go away to a new country and begin all over again, though wheelwrights are in great demand, so they say.'

'Your husband thinks there are good openings for industry nearer home, Mrs. Challice,' replied Simon. 'A most observant man.'

'Too hopeful as I always tell him, sir,' answered Ivy.

'The old kiln, now. He feels very sure that it could be revived to good purpose for burning lime. And there's Withy Platt—he tells me that good money might be made with the osiers in skilled hands.'

Richard Challice and his son, Samson, now joined the tea-party and found Simon well content with his entertainment. The talk ranged over local subjects and Mr. Pye showed no eagerness to be gone. Indeed, he lighted his pipe presently and set himself to win the friendship of the young men. He had ere now taken a great personal liking to Richard and found himself interested in the man and well satisfied to be in his company. There was something about the cheerfulness and goodwill that Dick displayed which touched the disillusioned spirit of Simon, and he found in the wheelwright's attitude to life matter

for mild admiration. Mr. Pye marvelled at the younger's optimism, but it touched him and he rather envied a bent of mind capable of such steadfast hope. He would check Richard sometimes and strive to waken philosophic doubts, but he never succeeded; while on the other hand he was occasionally amused to find Dick's sanguine speculations capable of creating a transitory cheerfulness in himself. Not many things amused Simon, but Richard did entertain him and he found in the man and his mother a measure of genuine interest. Indeed, there now awakened in his mind an impulse to serve this new acquaintance and surprise him; but as yet he had not mentioned this friendly purpose. Mr. Pye in truth designed a gift, which was not going to leave him any the poorer, but which he now understood Richard well enough to know would mightily enrich him. As yet he kept silent about the matter, weighing in his cautious fashion whether the proposed present was really calculated to serve the wheelwright, or whether it might only grow into a source of vexation and trouble to him.

He reflected once more upon this problem, while he sat and listened to Verity. Seeing that Simon attended to her recollections, her family did the like, and Granny, conscious of being in the centre of the stage, excelled herself. Mr. Pye felt gently moved at the warmth of his welcome.

'Come again,' begged Granny. 'You come and see me, Master, when the rest of 'em be out of the way, and I'll call home another song or two, as I doubt anybody's left to sing in the world but me.'

He accepted her invitation.

'Gladly I will come. My son is to pay me a visit shortly,' said Simon, 'but I don't expect him to stop very long. He's a sporting man and this will be a new world to him. I haven't seen him for some years—we don't often meet.'

Verity remembered that he had once spoken slightly of his son, but said nothing about that.

He shook hands with all of them deliberately and thanked them for giving him such a pleasant afternoon. Then he turned to Richard and told him that he wanted a word or two. They went out together. The events of the afternoon had decided Mr. Pye to speak. 'I've never given anything away that I wanted to keep,' he said, 'and so I've never been any the poorer for a gift. But rightly speaking, Dick, a gift is no gift if the giver doesn't find himself the poorer for it. To give away what you don't want and won't miss, whether it's time, money, or goods, is nothing. But I was never a giver and I'm too old to reform in that matter.'

'A man's always got something to give, if he's worth calling a man,' answered Challice. 'If it's only a spot of sense or a bit of time, you can always find them will be the better for it, Master. And I'm sure you don't deny your sense to anybody.'

'Sense is cheap,' answered Simon. 'And few things command less gratitude. And now I'm going to follow my mean rule, Dick, and give away something I haven't got the least use for. I don't want the ruin and I don't want the thicket and I don't want the ground under them. But I've heard you say that a bit of Devon earth for your own would delight you, and if you like this patch, I'll sign it over to you and you can call it yours.'

'You mustn't do it, sir! You don't know what you're saying,' vowed the wheelwright. 'This fine spot of ground will be worth two hundred pounds if ever Merton was to grow a bit; and then a builder would give you all that for it, if not more.'

'I've no wish to see Merton grow, and that's the only

condition, Richard. You mustn't sell again and you mustn't put up cottages. For the rest, you can do as you please.'

'Great Powers, Master! My very own ground?'

'Your very own, and much good may it do you,' said Simon. 'Now I'm going home and you can pad your property awhile if you're in a mind to.'

'Never was such a deed done in my knowledge,' declared the younger man. 'I can't pay you, nor nothing like it; but I'll never forget such a wonder, and I'll never turn a clod but what I thank you—and—and—you can look to me for your potatoes and early vegetables and such-like for evermore, Master.'

'Make no such matter of it,' begged Mr. Pye. 'You're doing me a service by taking it. I want nature "red in tooth and claw" pushed a bit farther off, Richard. Time was when I liked poking about there, but not now. Nature's better at a distance—like a good many other people. When you get to close quarters, you find a lot to shock you. Good night. I'll have the deed of gift drawn next week.'

'First thing I'll do will be to build you a good sizable wood stack for next winter's firing,' said Challice, whose mind now hummed with details. 'You'll be my first thought now I'm a man of property, Master.'

Then he was left alone with his riches, and felt that he must be dreaming and feared every moment would bring him awake again. He tramped about in the failing dusk, but listened not to the song of the birds, marked not the beauty of the sunset light on thorn and wild rose and honeysuckle. In his mind he already saw his ground clear and clean; but that was a minor matter. The kiln drew him like a magnet and he trampled round it, poked and pried into the pile as he had often done before and pictured it restored, crowned with the sour vapour of calcining stone,

crackling cheerfully under layers of coal and mineral, pouring out hundreds of tons of lime to enrich the countryside. The sun was long set and grey twilight thickened. Rabbits moved and an owl hooted over Richard's head, but he sat on, and through the web of his thoughts, returning again and again, came the tremendous knowledge that this delectable point of earth was his own with all its promise and infinite possibility. And each time he remembered it, he remembered Mr. Pye.

'What a man !' he kept saying over and over again, for it takes a generous spirit to appreciate generosity. The stingy cannot.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE SEPULCHRE OF CHRIST.

BY ARCHER CUST.

EASTER in Jerusalem is the season of High Festival. It is the occasion of the great Moslem celebration of Nebi Musa, when the masses of the Faithful pour into the Holy City from the hill villages and desert encampments to enjoy a week of feasting and revelling, with a pleasant savouring of political argument. It is also the time of the Jewish Passover, when the symbolism of the Exodus is re-enacted in the family feast of the Seder. And it is the season when Christian men and women of every race and every creed gather to share with each other the joy of the triumph of the Resurrection, when for a while life goes back two thousand years and, as then, man greets his neighbour with the glad words — 'Christ is Risen !'

The imposing offices that commemorate the story of the Passion, the Washing of the Feet, the Calvary Procession and the grand culminating ceremony of the Holy Fire, are held in the historic Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is built over the traditional sites of Golgotha and the Tomb. Some reject these as the true sites. There is the uncertainty as to the alignment of the Jewish City wall : for the one known fact about the location of Golgotha and the Tomb is that, following the accepted Roman and Jewish usage, they must have been situated outside the gates. Here archæology has hitherto not been able to provide any conclusive evidence. To others, the propinquity of the two sites, both being comprised under one building, seems suspiciously convenient : but the Gospel tells us that the

garden, in which Joseph of Arimathea had prepared his tomb, was 'in the place where He was crucified.' There is a preconceived notion too that the Crucifixion took place on an eminence—here we think of Mrs. Alexander's well-known line—'There is a green hill far away.' But we are told no more than that it was '*the place* of a skull.' Thus it has come about that many, particularly of the Anglican persuasion, accept the alternative sites that lie a short distance north of the present Damascus Gate, known as the Garden Tomb and Gordon's Calvary. General Gordon, visiting Jerusalem shortly before his last return to Egypt, recognised this rounded hillock, with the two indentations on its southern face, as the true 'place of a skull.' The historicity of the sites of Calvary and the Sepulchre present a problem that, it seems, must ever remain undecided; and in truth the argument is of little moment compared with the fact that for sixteen centuries the Holy Sepulchre that we know to-day has been to the Christian world the visible centre of its belief, on whose account millions have braved the perils of land and sea and whole cataracts of human lives have been poured out in massacre and in war. Now, at last, what the Crusaders sought in vain to accomplish has come about and the Shrines of Calvary and the Resurrection lie secure in the guardianship of a Christian Power.

Few buildings in the world can look back on so chequered a history as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Its approach tells of its turbulent past. The *parvis* in front of the entrance is entered by two gates, provided with heavy doors. Around are broken bases and columns, themselves probably taken from earlier buildings, that were once part of the twelfth-century Hospital of the Knights of St. John. Of the two great portals, one is closed, having been walled up by Saladin to facilitate the control of the crowds of his Christian

subjects and of the foreign pilgrims at the time of the great festivals. By the entrance is the tombstone of an English Crusader Knight, Philip d'Aubigny, who was tutor to Henry III, Governor of Guernsey and one of the signatories of Magna Carta. His vow accomplished, he died in Jerusalem in A.D. 1236, and his bones were laid as near as possible to his earthly journey's end.

The present façade, as indeed the general lay-out of the building, dates from the period of the Crusades. It was, however, Constantine the Great who first enclosed the sites of Calvary and the Resurrection, destroying the pagan Temple of Venus that Trajan had built, and erecting over the former the Basilica of the Martyrion and over the latter the Shrine of the Anastasis.

Constantine was the last Emperor to make the name of Rome great. He realised that Christianity had become a force with which the power of Rome, already showing signs of enfeeblement, would have to reckon and that it would be politic to secure to his throne the support of the Christians in the Empire. So he determined to catch their imagination and win their loyalty by erecting over the sites that they held in deep reverence as being connected with the life on earth of the Founder of their Faith, and in particular over the traditional site of His Sepulchre, buildings that would bring both fame to his name and honour to their religion. An element of the miraculous was introduced by the journey, conducted with much pomp and ceremony, to the Holy Land of his mother, the Empress Helena, for the discovery of the True Cross, to which it was announced she had been guided in a vision.

A letter from the Emperor to Macarius, the Bishop of Jerusalem, has survived in which he states his wish that a Basilica finer than any in the whole world should be built

over the spot where the monument of the Passion, hidden for so many years, had been rediscovered. From the stories of the early travellers that have come down to us, we can imagine how magnificent Constantine's fane must have been, not only in its general plan and design, but also in the detail of its decoration and adornment. It lasted for some three hundred years before, in common with the other Christian edifices in the country, it was laid waste by the fierce hordes of the Persian King, Chosroes II. Little now remains of the original structure ; in the adjoining Russian Convent and in a timber-store next door the lower strata of part of the Eastern wall of the Martyrion, including traces of two of the great doors, are preserved, and possibly the Byzantine columns that form part of the ambulatory of the present church may have belonged to the northern colonnade of the great open Court in which Constantine's shrines were set.

The invaders did their work well. For three days the Holy City was given over to murder and rapine, and the relic of the True Cross was carried off. The Persian King, however, had a Christian wife, and soon the Christians who had been spared obtained permission to rebuild their Church. This restoration, which was directed by the Patriarch Modestus, seeing that it was carried out from local resources alone cannot have approached the magnificence of the Emperor's work. It is indeed doubtful whether the Martyrion was rebuilt at all ; but the Anastasis over the Tomb was restored and one or two smaller shrines were added. Scarce, however, had the voices of praise and thanksgiving been heard again before the rededicated altars, when there appeared at the gates the Peril from the Desert, the multitude of Islam. Headed by their white-haired Patriarch Sophronius, the anxious Christians gathered at the entrance, praying that

a new disaster might be averted from them and from their beloved building. Their prayers were answered, for they saw the miracle that they had scarce dared to hope for happen before their eyes.

As the swarthy warriors of the Crescent approached, they halted as if held back by an unseen force. At last the Caliph himself, Omar, the successor of the Prophet, arrived. The Church he saw was beautiful; he remembered, too, that Mohammed had enjoined that the Christians were 'Kitabi,' that is 'people of the Book,' worshippers of the True God but in the wrong way, and that therefore they should be treated with generosity. So he stretched out his hand to the aged Patriarch and took his flock and their Church under his protection.

For four hundred years Modestus's Church survived. Pilgrimages were resumed and on the whole the lot of the Christians under their Arab lords was tolerable. The world was emerging from the Dark Ages; the Moslem East basked in the shining splendour of the Court of Harun-al-Rashid, while in the West Charlemagne was laying the foundations of our European civilisation. These two great Princes knew and admired each other, and as a gage of goodwill, the Moslem sent to the Christian (together with, it is curious to read, his only elephant, Abu-Labubah, 'Father of Intelligence') the keys of the Holy Sepulchre.

But the most fearful visitation of all was yet to come. About the time of the first millennium A.D., Egypt lay under the rule of one of the strangest characters in history, the mad Fatimite Caliph, El Hakem. He founded a new religion, that is to-day represented by the sect of the Druzes, of which he appointed himself the divinity, and then set out to destroy all and everything in his reach that did not bow the knee before him. The full blast of his mad fury fell on Jerusalem.

The sacred shrines were razed, so that they could scarcely be identified. An attempt was even made to cut away all traces of the Tomb, but tradition relates that no chisel could make an impression on the sacred rock. Then suddenly the Caliph appears to have repented of his madness, and leave was granted to the Patriarch Nikephorus for the Christian offices to be resumed amid the fallen columns and shattered cloisters. The glad tidings were carried to Byzantium and the Emperor Monomachus, at the price it is said of the release of several thousand Moslem prisoners of war, made it possible for the work of rebuilding to begin. The Anastasis, the Golgotha Chapel, and some of the shrines were rebuilt: but they were only the restoration of a restoration, a poor reminder of the glorious original.

It seemed now that the prayers for the peace of Jerusalem would at last be answered. But it was not to be. From the restless heart of Central Asia, there burst over the borderlands of the Empire and over the decaying Persian and Abbassid Kingdoms the greatest blight in history, the Grand Devastator, the Turk. Hordes of these savages overwhelmed Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine. Their galleys swept the Black Sea and the Mediterranean and threatened the Imperial City itself. They did not, however, visit the Holy City with the destruction that was feared. Rather, like their successors in later days, they saw in the Christians an excellent prey for extortion and a profitable source of revenue.

The accounts which have been preserved of pilgrimages of this epoch all tell the same tale of robbery and insult and of the oppression which the devoted servants of the Sepulchre suffered at the hands of their Turkish overlords. The pilgrims' tales profoundly moved a world that was already ill at ease. As the first millennium after Christ approached, the young civilisations of the West were terrified by presages

of the impending end of the world. Their forebodings were strengthened by the widespread misery and famine that characterised the close of the tenth century. So deep was the conviction that the world was on the brink of chaos that even official documents opened with the doom-laden phrase, '*appropinquante termino mundi.*' The fateful year passed, but the terror only revived in an intensified form as the thousandth anniversary of the Crucifixion approached. When at length the clouds lifted, in their gratitude and relief men vowed themselves in service to God, who had thus in His mercy spared the world. A passionate enthusiasm for the pilgrimage to Jerusalem seized upon high and low, rich and poor; even women and children now left their all to take the Cross.

Among the pilgrims who succeeded about the year 1092 in making their way back to France was a poor hermit, by name Peter, a native of Amiens. According to the traditional story, Christ had appeared to him in a vision as he slept exhausted by the Tomb and bade him hasten home and call those who believed on Him to rescue His City and His Tomb from its desolation. So Peter became the apostle of the Crusades. The Pope Urban II, doubtless having an eye to the political situation, for he had inherited the struggle between the Papacy and the Kings of Germany, gave a ready ear to Peter's cause, and at the Council of Clermont in November, 1095, he summoned the chivalry of France to cross the seas and wrench the sacred soil from the power of the Infidel. Urban's call to the Crusade acted like magic on his hearers: with the cry '*Deus Vult,*' that became the watchword of the Crusaders, they pressed forward to enlist in the sacred service, receiving their commission from the Pope's own hand. The enthusiasm spread like a fire all over France and Italy, into Sicily and along the Rhine-

land, and even into this country, and by the ensuing winter the advance guard, led by Peter himself, of the First Crusade had got under way.

This is not the place to tell the story of that great host, of its sufferings and vicissitudes as it lumbered through the Balkans, harassed by the savage Hungarians and the treacherous Bulgarians ; past Constantinople, where the horrors of two centuries later were only avoided by the refusal of Godfrey de Bouillon to bear arms against brother Christians ; through Asia Minor, where the Turks barred the way until, with the miraculous aid of St. George, they were defeated at Dorylaeum ; down the Syrian coast, where the seductions of Antioch, the conquered city of Sin, proved almost a greater peril than the armies of the enemy.

Some half-million of the soldiers of the Cross had perished before at last in 1099 the Holy City fell. Perhaps their sufferings may make some allowance for the terrible scenes that followed.

One of the first tasks of the victorious Crusaders was the rebuilding of the Holy Sepulchre. They found an open court, containing various shrines disconnected and rather poorly built, still following the original Byzantine plan. They conceived the idea of enclosing all the shrines under the roof of a single vast church. They wished it to be the most glorious example of all the churches of the new age. In their train were many master-masons and architects who were imbued with the spirit of the Gothic style that in their home lands was now replacing the heavier and more restricted Romanesque. The craftsmanship of Europe was drawn upon to make a building truly worthy of its unique and priceless associations and of all the toll of human lives that the redemption of the Sepulchre had caused. The Greek Emperor, now relieved of his unwelcome guests,

gave his assistance also, lending the most skilled of his mosaic workers.

So there grew up the great edifice, which in its outline is the same as is seen to-day. Descriptions by travellers of the period, Moslem as well as Christian, talk in marvelling terms of the gorgeous mosaics that covered the roofs and walls, of the expensive hangings and brocades and paintings. Between the entrance doors was a statue of the Risen Lord and over the lintels sculptured tympana of shining marble, depicting the raising of Lazarus and the Last Supper, and an allegory of the Tree of Life. The Golgotha Chapel in particular was covered with glowing mosaic, and was adorned with a marble pavement of elaborate design.

For four hundred years the great Church of the Crusaders, with all its chapels and commemorative shrines, stood as it was built. Like his great predecessor Omar, Saladin, when the Holy City fell into his power after the disaster of Hattin, displayed a spirit of mercy and tolerance to the Christians, and placed guards at the entrance to the Sepulchre to show to all that he regarded the sacred building as lying under his protection. And throughout the centuries of Moslem rule there was comparative peace in Jerusalem, though at times the conditions of the Christians grew worse and the tolls that were exacted from pilgrims became oppressive. The danger rather lay from the unending quarrels among the Christian sects themselves and from the intrigues of the Foreign Powers who used them, the French the Latins, the Russians the Orthodox, as pawns in their diplomatic struggles at the Porte. The predominance in the Holy Places between Western and Eastern Christianity was constantly changing—in the middle of the eighteenth century no less than six times in as many years—and on each occasion a rich profit must have flowed into the coffers of the Sultan.

It was in 1808 that the last tragedy occurred when, one hot summer's morning, through the carelessness of an Armenian monk, a devastating fire broke out, destroying the wooden Dome of the Rotunda and gutting the interior of the Choir and of the Golgotha chapels. Much of what was left of the Crusaders' handiwork, including the Gothic shrine over the Tomb itself, now perished. Worse was to come, for it was left to the hand of the restorer to complete the havoc of the fire. The Latin Powers were then in the throes of their struggle with Napoleon, so the Greek Orthodox saw their chance and elicited the Sultan's approval for the restoration to be carried out by them. They began by destroying the Tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin that lay just inside the entrance; they blocked the Gothic windows; they defaced the Calvary chapels with cheap plaster decorations and, as a crowning horror, erected the tasteless and unworthy structure that now covers the Tomb. Moreover, the work was throughout badly executed, with the result that the Church presents the aspect of general untidiness, of peeling plaster and dirty stucco, that it does to-day. This sad state of affairs was made much worse by the violent jealousies between the various communities who hold rights of office in the Church, on which account it became practically impossible for even the smallest work of renovation, or sometimes even cleaning, to be carried out. And provided that there was no serious breach of the peace, the Turk did not bother.

At last now it has been possible to put in hand the most essential repairs and to remove some of the worst blemishes: for, under the beneficent and impartial sway of Great Britain, even the most longstanding and the bitterest rivalries can eventually lose their force.

## KINGS, QUEENS AND CORONATIONS.

BY E. THORNTON COOK.

FROM the day when William the Conqueror bestrode the grave of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, demanding the crown, to the accession of George VI, England has known forty ruling sovereigns. Of these, four have come to the throne as children and four between the ages of fifteen and nineteen. Nine had passed the twentieth milestone; thirteen were in the thirties, four in the forties and three over fifty. Edward VII celebrated his sixtieth birthday three months after his Coronation, and William IV, England's oldest monarch, came to the throne at sixty-five. Edward V and Edward VIII were England's only uncrowned kings. Not since the seventeenth century, and the coming of William of Orange, have we had so youthful a King as George VI—nor, from 1066 to the Coronation of James II, one so mature.

'A Coronation,' said Horace Walpole, stirred by the romance of newly wedded George III and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, is 'the liveliest sight in the world,' and he found the ceremony in the Abbey 'as awful a pageant as can be!'

Prices for Coronation seats have risen considerably. When Edward II was crowned a charge of a farthing was considered somewhat excessive, but those who wished to see Henry VIII ride down Cheapside with beautiful Katherine of Aragon in her litter drawn by white palfreys, had to pay eight times as much. At the Restoration householders along the route would let no seats under half a crown, and

when George I came from Hanover five shillings was the charge, despite the fact that the monarch had left his Queen behind. Forty-six years later a fortunate few paid ten good golden guineas to look down on the youthful King and Queen (who had stirred Walpole's enthusiasm) from the vantage-point of a seat aloft in the Abbey. Guineas, be they never so golden, fail in obtaining such privilege in an age which is often called materialistic !

The earliest known consecration of a King in England took place in the eighth century, and two hundred years later St. Dunstan administered a Coronation oath to Ethelred II that is strangely similar in essentials to that which will be taken by George VI when he goes 'to be hallowed king with mickle pomp' as have his predecessors.

'In the name of Christ, I promise three things to the Christian people my subjects,' so vowed Ethelred. 'First that the Church of God and all Christian peoples shall always preserve true peace under our auspices ; second that I will interdict rapacity . . . third that I will command equity and mercy in all judgments.' . . .

Later, the oath was cast in interrogatory form. That framed for 'Gulielmi et Maria Riegis et Regina Angliac' is the basis of the modern oath :

'Will you solemnly promise and swear to God to govern the people of the Kingdom of England and the Dominions thereunto belonging according to the Statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the same ?'

Rex et Regina : 'I solemnly promise so to do.'

'Will you, to your power, cause law and justice and mercy to be executed in all your judgments ?'

Rex et Regina : 'I will.'

'Will you, to the utmost of your power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel and the

Protestant Reformed religions established by law, and will you preserve to the Bishops and Clergy of this Realm, and to the Church committed to their charge, all just rights and privileges, as by law do, or shall, appertaineth to them or any of them ?

Rex et Regina : ' All this I promise to do.'

King and Queen had attended early service at Whitehall before coming to the Abbey, as it was considered only proper that the sovereigns should 'begin that glorious day with Him by Whom Kings reign.' It was an anxious hour. A letter from her exiled father had just been thrust into Mary's hand threatening her with his curse as the usurper of his throne—and as the Coronation procession started William received word of James's landing in Ireland.

Treasured in our archives lie the Coronation Rolls of our sovereigns complete since the coming of the Stuarts. Each measure eighteen yards or more, the vellum sheets (24"  $\times$  12") being tacked together. That of George IV is unique in that it lacks the King's signature to the oath, since, by some inexplicable oversight, the responsible cleric forgot to see this sheet laid ready on the altar. George alone was unperturbed and volunteered to subscribe, instead, the copy of the oath as printed in the service book used by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Coronations have increased in dignity through the ages. John, as a reward to the Cinque Ports for services rendered in connection with his various voyages to and from Normandy, appointed five representative barons to carry a canopy over his head when he went to the Abbey. By the time James II and beautiful Mary of Modena came to the throne the number had been increased considerably :

' And the Barons of the Cinque Ports, thirty-two in all, stood with the canopies at the upper end of the Great Hall,

and sixteen of them received the Queen at the foot of the great stone steps, three of the said barons supporting each of the corner staves and two each of the middle staves; the other sixteen received the King in like manner.'

Terrible trouble developed over these gentry in later reigns. At the Coronation Banquet of George II their position was shifted from the first table on the King's right hand to the second—and never a baron would sit! Alas, the protest availed nothing. At the next Coronation the indignant barons found no table prepared for them whatever.

At the Court of Claims which sat before the Coronation of Henry III the Lord Mayor and certain citizens succeeded in enforcing their claim to the office of 'Cellerers,' and rode in the royal procession from the Tower to Westminster, each with a gold or silver cup in his hand as badge of office.

Edward III founded 'the loving Company of the Order of the Garter,' appointing St. George, the Victorious, knight and martyr, as its patron saint; succeeding Kings permitted Knights of the 'Blew Garter' to hold the canopy which screened royalty during the anointing.

On the eve of the Coronation of Henry IV the Order of the Bath was created and henceforward newly made knights were entitled to carry certain dishes to the King's table at the wondrous banquets held in Westminster Hall.

Henry VII, not feeling too sure of his position despite the defeat of Richard III at Bosworth, raised the Yeomen of the Guard, enrolling in the corps only those who were 'hardy, strong and of agility.' People shook their heads, 'not remembering any King of England before that time which used such a furniture of daily soldiers.' But Henry VIII thought little of the fifty archers who had attended his father, 'hardy, strong and of agility' though they might be. To

them was now delegated such odd jobs as the putting up and taking down of the royal beds when the Court travelled, and the carrying of the King's baggage. The Gentlemen Pensioners—later named the Band of the Gentlemen at Arms—were called into being to serve as the sovereign's personal bodyguard.

Elizabeth took pity on the discarded Yeomen (there were handsome men among them, and she so hated those of ill-favour that an otherwise suitable attendant could find no place at court when he lacked a front tooth) and allowed them to carry in the royal dinner. The dress, scarlet with a golden rose on the wearer's back, was not expensive, the 'Goune' costing Xs with 'IIIls and VIII extra for the hosen and shoone.'

Crowds thronged the streets to watch 'the most dradde soveraigne Ladye Elizabeth pass to Westminster all richlie furnished and honourably accompanied, though Bishops might hesitate to anoint her. Those who could find seats paid sixpence for them right willingly.'

*En route* the new Queen was offered a Bible, a purse of gold and some cautionary pageantry in which 'the causes of a ruinous Commonwealthe' were illustrated.

Greatly stirred, Elizabeth vowed that she would be as good to her subjects 'as ever Quene was. . . . No will in me can lacke, neither, do I trust, shall lacke any power . . . And for the peace and quietness of you all I will not spare, if need bee, to spend by bloode.'

So might have spoken the first of the Tudors when claiming the crown 'by heredity and the judgment of God,' or that bold Lancastrian, Henry IV, who snatched the crown from a weak monarch.

'And as he went to Westminster on every side of him he had a sword borne, the one the Sword of the Church, the

other the Sword of Justice. . . . Thus they entered the Abbey Church of St. Peter at nine of the clocke, and in the midst of the Church was a high scaffold all covered in red, and in the midst thereof was a Chair Royal covered with cloth of gold. Then the King sat down in the Chair and so sat in Estate Royall saving he had not the crown . . . Then at the four corners of the scaffold the Archbishop of Canterbury showed unto the people how God had sent unto them a man to be their King.' . . .

One needs a lion heart to be a monarch and so Queen Elizabeth learnt in the forty-four years of her reign :

'To be a King and weare a crown is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that beare it,' she told her last Parliament. 'For myself, I never was so much enticed with the glorious name of King . . . as delighted that God had made mee his instrument to maintain His truth and to . . . defend this kingdome from dishonour, damage, tyrannie and oppression.' . . .

The Coronation of George IV was one of the most splendid known. At it, for the last time, was served the gorgeous Coronation banquet in Westminster Hall, whereat those who had made good their petitions proving themselves tenants of the crown 'by grand serjeanty' performed personal service.

With the banquet passed the age-old challenge which used to be delivered by the sovereign's champion between courses.

For five hundred years a Dymoke had served the royal line in this capacity. One Dymoke had been Elizabeth's champion, his son had launched the same defiance on behalf of James I and Charles I; his grandson dashed down the gauntlet after the Restoration.

'Armed at all points in rich armour and riding a goodlie

white charger between the High Constable and the Erle Marshall also on horseback' the Champion entered the Hall and before him went 'two Trumpeters, two Sergeants at Arms with their Maces and two Esquires, one carrying the "targett" and the other a lance. . . . Before them went Yorke Herald :

'If any person of what degree soever, high or low, shall deny or gainsay Our Sovereigne Lord King Charles the Second, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, Sonne and next heire to our Sovereign Lord Charles the First, the last King deceased, to be right heire to the Imperiall Crowne of this Realme . . . here is his Champion who sayeth that he lyeth and is a false Traytor, being ready in person to combat with him.' . . .

Three times over did the bold words ring out and was the gauntlet thrown, after which the Champion made 'humble obeysance to the King and a guilt cup full of wine being brought . . . the King drank to the Champion.' Then the Knight quaffed the remainder of the wine, 'and making him humble reverence departed, taking the Cup for his fee.' . . .

Economically minded, William IV decided to forgo such pageantry for his country's good and, having been crowned, drove happily home immediately afterwards.

Young Queen Victoria contented herself with a state banquet at the Palace on usual lines, as did Edward VII and George V.

Reading the menus provided for the sumptuous feasts which were spread in Westminster Hall for a line of sovereigns whose reigns extended over seven hundred and fifty years, one marvels that never one of the newly crowned monarchs succumbed to the Ordeal by Food which they were required to undergo.

The Coronation banquet of Edward I cost eight counties

an average of 60 oxen, 100 pigs, 60 sheep and 3,000 fowls each. In all 23,500 animals were slaughtered to make this Plantagenet's holiday, while 1,000 pipes of wine were contributed by the King's continental dominions.

The banquet provided for eighteen-year-old Katherine of Valois, when Henry V won her at point of the sword, took place in Lent, so 'this feast was all of fish. Nothing of mete was there saving brawne served with mustarde.' But there were 'ded eels a-plentie,' to say nothing of 'pyke, trout, codlyng and fryed playes and crabs,' likewise 'freshe salmon, breame of the Sea, broyled smelt and lampreys frese baked.'

James II was more fortunate, he having selected St. George's Day for the Coronation. On this occasion twelve hundred and forty-five dishes were served to the diners in Westminster Hall, ninety-nine of them at the royal table. Among the viands were such delicacies as 'cocks-combes, cabbage pudding, stags tongues, Rabbett ragout, oysters and mushrooms well pickled, periwinkles, razor fish and carp, a Boares head enarmed in a Castell Royall, venyson, grouse, swanes, stewed heron, gilt pig, cranes, a pecok and some curlews,' together with a vast assortment of 'confections' and a lavish supply of creams. There is no information as to how many guests shared the ninety-nine works of art prepared by the King's Master Cook, 'all of which were well dressed and ordered all manner of ways,' but their Majesties 'withdrew from the banquet at seven of the clocke, extremely well satisfied.'

In dusty files among other records one may find 'the expenses and charges of such dinners' together with minute particulars as to the measurements and arrangement of the tables; that prepared for Charles II, 'at which only his Majesty and the Duke of York sat, being 18 ft. long and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  broad.' It was served with three courses of meat, thirty-two dishes

to a course; this in addition to 240 lb. of 'confections dry, choice confections liquid, and 4 basons of creams.'

Those of lesser rank were served at other tables, that for the Lords Spiritual being 30 feet long and 4 feet broad. These received '2 messes of the like fare to His Majesty's in three courses, seventy-two dishes of meat to a mess.'

The Lords Temporal were ranged along 88 feet of table and feasted on 320 separate dishes.

The Lord Mayor and his Aldermen, the Barons of the Cinque Ports, and the Heralds, had short lengths of board with upwards of 300 dishes of viands in addition to confectionery 'wet and dry,' fruits of the season and salads.

At the Coronation banquets those ladies who were merely permitted to look down upon the festival, lowered handkerchiefs and baskets and drew up such delicacies as could be spared by the surfeited diners down below.

Sometimes, temporary kitchens were erected in Palace Yard to facilitate the serving of these feasts, but in every case the ceremonial was such that one wonders to what degree of chill the 'hotte metes' had succumbed before they reached his wearied Majesty.

'Dinner being ready,' the newly crowned King would appear (preceded by a fanfare of trumpets) carrying the Orb and Sceptre in his hands. Escorted by the Lord Chamberlain and with the Swords carried naked before him his Majesty would seat himself in the Chair of State. Generally the Queen arrived in a separate procession preceded by the Vice-Chamberlain and followed by various ladies who were required to sit at her Majesty's feet throughout the meal.

All being in readiness, 'My lords the Sewers' took up position and the Sergeant of the Silvery Skullery called for a dish of meat, wiped the bottom of the dish, likewise the cover, and took assay of it.

The Chief Lord Sewer, in a surcote with a hood about his neck and his towel over all, led the serving procession towards the dais on which stood the royal table according to age-old precedent.

Two Clerk Comptrollers

(In velvet gowns trimmed with gold lace with black velvet caps in their hands.)

Two Clerks of the Green Cloth

The Master of the Household.      The Cofferer.

Six Sergeants at Arms with their Maces  
(two abreast)

The Earl Marshal on a charger (with staff of gold in his hand)      The High Steward on a charger (with white wand) Charger.

Six Sergeants at Arms with their Maces  
(two abreast)

The Comptrollers of their Majesties' Households with various assistants brought up the rear.

When Knights of the Bath had been newly created these performed serving service; failing these, the Gentlemen Pensioners marched up two by two, followed by as many 'private gentlemen' as the number of the dishes made necessary; but first came the Lord of the Manor of Addington carrying 'a mess of potage or gruel called Dilligrout' which had been served at Coronation banquets from time immemorial, he being attended by 'two Clerks of the Kitchen in black satin gowns.'

So the first course reached the table, but even yet their majesties might not eat. With solemn state the Regalia had to be delivered to the lords appointed for the honour of holding it. Then the Lord Great Chamberlain and his Majesty's Cupbearer must go to the King's cupboard, and

having washed, the Lord Great Chamberlain, preceded by the Usher of the Black Rod, attended by the Cupbearer and followed by the Sewers, must bring up a 'bason' for his Majesty's ablutions. Water was poured over the royal hands and the Lord of the Manor of Heydon held out the towel. . . .

The Queen's hands were cleansed with similar ceremony and matters advanced a step further.

Grace was said and at length their majesties sat down to dine, as did the peers and peeresses, these being attended on generally 'by persons who waited at the various cupboards,' and specifically by their personal menials, 'each member of the nobility being allowed one servant.'

The Chief Cupbearer (accompanied by assistants) now offered liquid refreshment in a gilt bowl that had to be returned to him as his fee; their majesties began to eat and the minor procession in which the Champion was the chief figure rode in.

The gorgeous meal continued with interminable ceremony. Now one presented three maple cups, the origin of which offering is lost in antiquity, now another brought 'a charger of wafers.'

The Lord Mayor of London, accompanied by the King's Cupbearer, came from the cupboard where he had attended to assist the Chief Butler, and with him walked twelve aldermen representative of the city corporations, draper, mercer, grocer, fishmonger, goldsmith, skinner, merchant-tailor, haberdasher, salter, ironmonger, vintner and cloth worker. Solemnly offering a bowl of wine they watched his Majesty drink, whereupon the Mayor claimed the golden bowl as perquisite and led his followers to find a place at table.

Darkness fell, the King's largess was scattered among the

people, healths were drunk with loyalty and affection, and the great ceremony drew to its conclusion. Water was brought once more; once again their majesties washed. The attendant lords handed back the royal ornaments, the processions re-formed, the Regalia was delivered to the ecclesiastics for temporary safe-keeping until the treasures could be returned to the Tower, and for royalty, the main happenings of the Coronation were over.

But the Lords Commissioners of the Court of Claims, who had previously delivered judgment as to which of the many claimants were entitled to do service now sat once more 'to take account how the various officers had performed their tasks' and see that all had their fees. The Archbishop of Canterbury required the purple velvet chair wherein he had sat and the stool on which he had knelt; the Earl Marshal claimed the King's palfrey and the chines of all the swans and cranes that had been served during the banquet. To the Chief Butler fell 'the best cold cup and cover with all the vessels of wine remaining under the bar.' The Grand Panneter, whose task it had been 'to beare the salte and the serving knives from the Pantry to the Kynges dyning table,' demanded all the salt cellars and spoons that had been used, while the Chief Lardiner asked for the remains of the venison, the kids, lard, fish and salt as his just dues. A Norfolk man claimed all the napery. The Almoner's demands included the silver dish in which the alms had been collected, a length of carpet over which the King had walked and 'a tun of good wine' (it is not surprising that, at one coronation, there had been six claimants for this lucrative post). Meanwhile, the King's Champion waited to know his Majesty's decision as to whether he might retain the charger upon which he had ridden and the royal armour in which his person had been encased.

When all were satisfied the weary commissioners had to see to it that the Coronation Roll was given into safe custody, 'for the benefit of posterity.'

In the Coronation Proclamation of George VI a clause safeguards the rights of those of his Majesty's 'loving subjects' who, through hereditary, claim right of performance 'of any such several Services, or any of them, at any future Coronation'; and it may be that in the misty future there will arise some monarch of strong stomach and much endurance who will revive the ancient glory of the gargantuan culinary festival which was celebrated over a period of seven and a half centuries in Westminster Hall.

God Save the King!

#### LONELINESS.

*That He alone might lead me by the hand,  
God gave me Thoughts that none can understand.*

*That I might cast on Him my every care,  
God gave me Dreams that no one else can share.*

*That I might never learn to love Him less,  
God, in His wisdom, gave me loneliness.*

CORYN HART.

## CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

BY ALAN JENKINS.

WHEN I came home the pale sky had been washed clean of clouds except for a few long grey-mauve shoals that hung about the west like ships awaiting the turn of the tide. I marched with a swing, for my ears were ringing yet with a wild fierce song that I had heard in a tiny hideous village-hall, *Cymru'n Un*, which is like a savage, fanatical battle-cry, the cry of the Wales of long ago when she challenged all who approached her marches, Saxon and Norman and English.

As I entered the dim kitchen, its blue slate floor afficker with firelight, Mrs. Rhys was reaching down a ham from a smoke-stained beam, and I noticed that the three cats, Persians who would leap at your eyes if you were not watchful, were not paying court to her as they did usually as supper-time approached. Then I saw them in the corner, intently inspecting the butt of Mr. Rhys's crook. Inquisitive, I lifted it up. There were smears of yolk and a chip or two of eggshell. At first I thought nothing of it; but my imagination runs on quick wheels and I suddenly wondered, for I had watched the birds on many days.

I was angry, and the old shepherd was angry, too, or sulky, rather, and because of that I saw that my guess had not been wild. He glanced sourly at me, he knew he had been wrong. I liked him when he was warm and gentle, when he was telling his grandson tales of the dog of darkness, or the *gwŷll* that rides over the moors and the black mountains on wind-tormented nights; but now he was sulky

and hostile and it was no use arguing with him. He knew the moor as another man knows his courtyard. He knew every gully and dingle and stone wall and brawling stream and sheep-track for miles round. He could watch the stars and the sky or smell the wind and say what weather would come. He was a healer, too. Yet so many years of wind and sun and rain and mist had not made his mind any more flexible. He was as stubborn as gorse root, and an idea once inside his small, alert, grizzled head and it stayed there however much in his innermost heart he knew he was wrong.

The passing of the storm had ript and rent the grey louring sky, and now rain-washed blue showed beneath the ragged hems of clouds rolling ponderously along the horizon, north and south. Westward, many long miles westward, lying like a drop of liquid in a spoon, which was a hollow of the mountains—blue and rain-sharpened—something glinted under a fugitive sunbeam, something grey and faint-seen : the distant sea across whose tormented waves the storm had trumpeted, lashing gull and cliff and boat with a demoniac fury.

A steady, warm wind, like a woman's even voice after the raging of a man, bluffed down from the mountains, furrowing the dark sombre heather and stippling with crescent ripples the calmer stretches of the clamorous streams along whose banks so many dippers already had their young.

On, on until they were halted like an invading army by the steadfast mountain-walls, the undulations of the moor rolled out, broken here and there by little hillocks and outcrops of shale, round whose time-leaved sides the heather lapped.

The voices of the moorland ran with the wind : the

vehement sibilant chorus of larks ascending on shivering wings, their small throats pulsating, their blood coursing hotly through their veins as they sang of their love; the long liquid bubble-cry of mated curlews who had come up from the winter estuaries; the more frequent wail of plovers, whose round green wings, glossed with bronze and purple, bobbed and flickered as the birds dashed and hurtled madly in the ecstasy of their nuptials, mastering gravity and wind, yet knowing not how they did so.

Out of the wind dropt another cry, faint and mewing and sorrowful, true voice of the moorland. Five hundred feet above the ivy-bearded lip of a ravine, fashioned and wrought by time and weather long before men drove sheep to the moorland, a bird wheeled, circling easily and gracefully. Black and small, a dark eyelash against the sky, the buzzard sailed in leisured flight. Sometimes, with wings motionless and square tail spread, he tilted in the wind, and imperceptibly, like the gentle fluting of water as a swallow dips to drink, a ripple passed through his quivering pinions.

Then suddenly, with wings half-closed as if he had lost the power of flight, in one abrupt sliding drop he fell a hundred feet, checked himself and wheeled again.

His mewing cries dropt thin and frail out of the clear air. The broad brown wings, paler and fringed with black to the eyes of his watching mate, flapped four times and once more he slid and checked, this time when he was the height of a fir-tree above the steep-sided little ravine, along whose rock-strewn bed a stream babbled excitedly on its journey to the sea.

Towards one of the uneven ledges that scarred the face of the cliff he gazed down with mild dark eyes. His brooding mate answered him cry for cry. She gazed intently up as he tacked and wheeled above her. She longed to rise

from the nest of heather bents and fibrous gorse branches, writhing sinuously about the rabbit bones and cast pellets which littered the ledge ; but she must stay, for between the sparse nest-lining of grass and dirty wool and her warm body lay three eggs, large and dull white and marked with red and violet. Before two sunsets had made the mountains glow, the first grotesque nestling would be struggling from his clinging shell.

She longed to rise and join her mate, so that together they might soar high into the spring sky, up, up, higher, still higher they would soar as they had done so many times, circling, crossing each other's paths and sometimes curving so close that their splayed pinion-tips seemed to touch, gently as a moth's wings touch a flower ; and then dividing they would glide half a mile across the valleys, and still mewling, sweep back and soar again, their flight their song——

But now she must stay and give warmth, and therefore life, to the blue, curled embryos which would one day master the air and the running wind—friend and enemy by turn—with all the grace of their parents. So the buzzards answered cry for cry, happy in each other.

To live he must kill : in a while the buzzard grew silent and drifted away. His brown eyes looked not for his mate but for prey moving on the face of the drear heather. He circled half a mile, soaring, soaring, wheeling, slowly, leisurely, head to wind, bony brows bent earthwards, wings bent slightly back like the keel of an anchor. Every trick and lift of the wind was met with a movement of wings and barred tail, a ripple of pinions, and the masterful poise was scarcely disturbed. Wind and wing strove together, yet in their striving were united, a foil to each other.

Far below the watching bird the lapwings flickered ceaselessly, mad in love. Once seven golden plovers passed across the moor in steady flight. Their lovely wings splintered the sunbeams into stabbing, darting needle-fragments. One of their own kindred ran forward in the heather as he saw them. He called *tooli tooli* in welcome, but the little flock of late-comers flew dumbly on and he relapsed into forlorn silence and stood on one leg, gazing after them.

The buzzard slid lower and watched for a beetle to scuttle across a bald patch of earth under the shadow of a grey boulder that was streaked white with his own droppings; for here he perched often, head hunched into shoulders, while the moorland wind searched through the feathers of his breast. No sign of life revealed itself and presently the buzzard descended towards this boulder to wait for a rabbit on the gentle slope which ran away from the heather-washed outcrop.

A rabbit was already out. An old buck lay in the spring-brilliant grass that struggled against the heather. When he saw the buzzard descend he crouched closely, not daring to move.

But grouse had been fighting near by, raising their blood-red wattles and challenging every cock of the moorland. They fought even though they had mated long since. They had been too preoccupied to notice the buzzard before, and now they rose with a startling *hwerra* of wings and scattering, for they no longer went in packs, fled, calling *kok kok kok*, warning all who were there to listen. The sudden whirr of bowed wings made the rabbit leap up in fright. The buzzard launched out clumsily from the white-stained boulder and swept low over the slope. The terror-stricken animal twisted and doubled as the great shadow drew closer.

With a dozen powerful sweeps of his vans the buzzard drove himself above his quarry. Yellow claws dangled ready for the kill. Wings thrashing above his back, he struck. Wings thwapt the heather as bird and animal struggled. The rabbit squealed as black curved talons tore flesh and fur of his haunches. His speed carried him on and the grip ended there. Bleeding and wild with pain and fear, the old buck scrambled down a bolt-hole. Others of his kith awoke at his coming and grew aware of his terror. They shifted uneasily away. Panting and grunting, the buck crouched by himself in the soothing darkness of the bury. He died slowly, days later, for the black talons had laid open his flesh even to the spine.

Wide wings turned away. The buzzard mounted. As he went his claws clutched and opened nervously with excitement of the chase. He had failed. He must kill elsewhere.

He soared two hundred feet and wheeled in a wide, effortless circle. He had seen something that drew him down. Under another outcrop lay a dingy grey-white form, inert and bedraggled. About it two small shapes moved, black and intent. The buzzard planed above them, his mild eyes watching anxiously. So graceful and powerful in flight, he feared the carrion crows. He feared everything; even the petulant-voiced plovers would mob him if he went near their nesting-ground, but most of all he feared the crows.

But here was meat. He slid down. The crows ceased their feasting when they heard the wind of his approach and gazed up angrily, their thick black beaks raised in readiness. When he settled on the grey shale with a flapping of wings that fanned the feathers of their backs, they resumed their meal, *paarking* abuse at him. They knew him well for a coward.

The buzzard did not attempt to join them. He must wait until they had had their fill. He watched them with mild melancholy yellow-rimmed eyes. His sickle talons could have struck off the head of each crow in flight. Yet was he afraid.

When, despite all his vicious buntings, his dam's meagre udders would yield no more milk for the time being, and his totter-legged companions had wearied of play, the lamb wandered inquisitively from the flock. The storm came and the sheep had moved like a grey wave down the slopes, while the lamb blundered farther away, his voice lost in the wind-howl. Sometimes he ran a little way and then halted, bleating urgently, then on again, anywhere but in the right direction, lashed by wind and rain. Weak and terrified he had tottered into the shelter of the outcrop while rain hissed through the heather and hail spattered and bounced in glee. In the west steam-white clouds trailed across the hidden mountains.

When the storm passed and the seeping rivulets ran away down the peaty soil, the crows came out, glad of the warmth on their bedraggled feathers. They found the dying lamb and contemplated him from the glistening boulder. *Aark aaruk*, they consulted together, as timid sunlight shot their plumage green and blue-black. Then they leapt down and cursed angrily at each other as to which should peck out the frightened eyes. That done, their stout black beaks quickly hammered the spark of life out of the small exhausted body.

Somewhere a black-faced ewe raised her frenzied voice long and frequently as she stumbled about sniffing each lamb of the flock in turn.

The buzzard waited.

Even the crows were satisfied at last. First one, then the

other hopped heavily away, belching his pleasure. They wiped their beaks on the grass, leaning their heads and snapping them from side to side.

Then one rose and harried the buzzard, and the other, who had waddled back and stood contemplating the carcase, reluctant to leave it, followed her example. Together they dived and swooped about the buzzard, jeering as they passed. Humbly he endured their insults for a while, until one of them stooped suddenly with black claws outspanned and buffeted him off his perch. A little cloud of brown neck feathers floated down and lay on the bloody sides of the lamb.

The buzzard mewed plaintively and flapped back to the boulder, but the crows kept up the game. They were enjoying this, they *parked* to each other. At last the buzzard spread his wings and soared above them, whereupon the black marauders sheered off eastward, croaking derision and contentment.

The buzzard fell and glided to the boulder, paused a moment, and then, flapping down, began to feed on the slinkmeat.

He gorged himself on the still-warm flesh, until his hooked beak and yellow cere were stained with blood. Then, having reascended to his perch and preened his soft brown plumage, he launched heavily out and set off for the distant ledge to relieve his mate.

When the slip of the new moon was growing visible in the south-east, frail and fresh and clean in the rain-washed sky, a plummy-tailed black-and-white sheepdog came questing over the slopes of the moor. Behind him, four hundred yards away, a man followed, moving resolutely with the steady plod of the moorlander.

Sometimes the wiry, high-trotting dog would halt and, with one forepaw raised, look back uncertainly at his master, as if seeking advice. Then he would run on again, sharp muzzle to ground for a moment, then lifting his head, gaze with deep-brown, intelligent eyes across the moor.

When the man reached the brow of the slope he, too, halted and, with a ragged-sided telescope at his eye, stood scanning the dark, rain-beaded heather that rolled out steadfast as the distant mountains, where dwelt finality and absoluteness.

Long did they cast about the breadth of the moor, while both man and dog listened for a summoning bleat above the murmur of the wind and the wail of plovers who still flung and tumbled in aerial display. But no bleat came, and when at last the shepherd heard one short urgent bark from the sheepdog, he knew how his search had ended.

He made his way slowly towards the boulders where the dog stood on guard, tongue aloll and brown eyes turned in understanding towards him.

'I could well have told, indeed,' the old man muttered, nodding his head and stirring the carcase with his foot. His weather-flayed cheeks flushed dull ember red as he leant on his crook and regarded the lamb. The dog flagged an apologetic tail.

The shepherd stooped suddenly and picked up three or four brown feathers that nestled in the grass. He held them in his palm and gazed on them a moment. Then he tilted his hand and let them float gently away one by one. He raised his eyes skyward. What he sought was not there.

'I do know where though, yes,' he answered his unuttered thoughts as he nodded to the dog. With a last glance at the lamb he turned and traipsed away across the moor. As though he were treading a well-marked track he set out

purposefully north-west. The wiry sheepdog trotted by his side.

A mile distant the little ravine opened treacherously and abruptly in the heather. The shepherd made his way round the shoulder of it and plodded along the precipitous edge.

As he trod through the wind-murmurous heather, wings whipt twenty yards away. First one, and presently the other buzzard lumbered out, silhouetted like blown burnt paper against the twilight sky. Soaring and mewing they beat up and away, and then afraid, wheeled above man and dog. They sailed about uneasily, their hearts full of fear. The timid male wheeled higher, mewing anxiously. His mate, bolder in her mother-instinct, circled lower round the man, but she too was afraid to come within striking distance. They did not curse, they mewed for pity.

Carefully the shepherd shuffled to the brink. He did not like the ravine. When he was a boy he had seen his father fall over its treacherous lip, and for long nights after he had dreamt of the grotesque broken body lying down there amongst the gorse and the scattered shale.

One hand clutching the heather, he dropt down full length and peered over. In a while his old eyes picked out what they sought. He shifted until he was directly above the ivy-hung ledge. He cast about for a stone. Then he realised he could reach the nest with his crook. He lowered it over, butt-end first, and with a quick stab broke one, then another, and finally the third of the precious shells.

Grunting with exertion, he drew back from the cliff and levered himself to his feet; then, shaking a gnarled knot-veined fist at the wheeling, mewing birds, he turned, and accompanied by the sedately trotting dog, trudged away home into the coming starlight.

## CINDERELLAS OF THE BOOK-SHELF.

## II.—SORCERY IN WORDS.

BY W. J. BLYTON.

IN a previous saunter through guide-books and maps, of all manner of countrysides and shires, we travelled in imagination on foot or at most jogged in coaches or were given a 'lift.' But in these next journeys it must be something swifter and dizzier than an aeroplane; say, the seven-league boots of swiftmess. The transitions and flights offered to the fancy by any dictionary (of dates, words or proper names) are incredibly swift—and refreshing. Only, the proper way to get at the *attar* of this book is to tack and veer idly up and down it; curiosity at the prow, and impulse at the helm. He who reads for fun will end by being more learned than he who reads for utilitarian reasons.

None of us will be indifferent to the centenary this year of the birth of the very human, erudite editor of the astonishing *New English Dictionary*, Sir James Augustus Henry Murray, who began this task for the Philological Society in 1879, continuing it—fascinated himself, and fascinating others—for thirty-six years till he 'died learning.' He was kept busier than any goalkeeper stopping evil shots from language gate-crashers; and at the same time busier than any big *hôte* admitting interesting and lawful new guests, and making them comfortable, and introducing them to the 'permanents.' The result is a book which, frankly, is a trophy of civilisation—a log of the amazing human adventure.

It is still being added to ; a lighthouse in the restless ocean of language.

'The first work of the kind in which a man may learn to think,' according to Voltaire, was Bayle's dictionary in 1696. But that was tendentious, in the sceptical interest ; as Dr. Johnson's was wilful and individual. To write Sir James Murray's name is to be reminded of the vast advance—humanist and scientific—since then ; also that the name has figured before in philology. Consider the prestige of Lindley Murray, Gilbert Murray's mastery of Greek and English, the gifts to literature from the house of Murray.

To take up a dictionary for ten minutes is, with most people who are not driven for time, to stretch the ten to fifty. For most of us are just walking curiosities, animated interrogation marks. We distrust specialism, but like tramp-steamers will take on any queer or out-of-the-way cargo. Surely it was in this connection that the sensible jingle was composed—

*'The world is so full of a number of things,  
I'm sure we should all be happy as kings.'*

A million words is nothing nowadays for a dictionary. Shakespeare contrived to work his miracles with, I believe, sixty thousand. Alas, many of us fob ourselves off with about five thousand only. We live in a well-found palace, but exist like disinherited sons. In 1100 B.C. one of the most popular entertainment books in China was the guide to Chinese perfected by Pa-out-she, with forty thousand characters, most of them hieroglyphic or rude representations rather like our signs of the zodiac. But then the Chinese always *were* so inventive and advanced ! Anyway, it is clear that they had invented a first-rate parlour game. For a dictionary is fun and recreation as well as preserved history,

precipitated philosophy (language is a great metaphysician), dialect in amber, poetry in solution. Here is something made by Man which dwarfs and humbles the individual man.

Can there be (you wonder) so many things, so many varieties of the same thing, so many shades of meaning, so many arts, sciences, callings, and affairs as may be seen on a dozen pages? O brave new worlds! The mind feels like a country maid suddenly introduced into a sounding metropolis. Indeed, Man must have lived to some purpose if he has built this enormous pagoda or cathedral of knowledge in his sojourn thus far! No one of us can hope to master more than a fraction and an angle of it all. 'What a piece of work is Man! In apprehension, how like a god,' etc. And this vast coral reef of information is growing, growing, before our eyes; words, ideas, inventions, and slang pouring in. The War alone gave us a thousand or more for the successors of Sir James Murray to cope with in his centenary year. Sir Edward Cook amusingly confessed to trying to 'plant' new words on the dictionary-makers: he and his colleagues

'knew that Sir James Murray was a careful reader of the papers with which we were connected, and we used sometimes to coin new words for the fun of seeing whether they would be included in the *New English Dictionary*. But this is only a pale counterpart of the fun which must be derivable from the coinage of new words which are required by new feats of daring and invention, and which can perforce be added to the language.'

He instances *ceiling* as a verb used officially by Trenchard of the R.A.F. to mean ascending to great heights. The expressive word *blimp* was coined first to describe a type of aircraft; in the last year or so it has been turned into a verb also, to mean having a seaside holiday flight. As 'chippy' was once the ship's carpenter, so 'sparks' is the wireless

operator. *Ballyhoo* comes from America, and admirably describes noisy publicity. *Scrounge* and *buckshee* (the latter from the Eastern *baksheesh*) are, as slang, efficient; 'blankety' is a polite escape from any profane word; 'bug-house' is American for a neglected or unstrung brain; to 'click' is to get just what one wants; 'cold feet' as a synonym for fear was a luckier stroke of genius than 'wind up'; *dud* and *not so dusty* have come to stay—in familiar talk at least, with *fed up*, and *cut no ice*, and *hot stuff*, and *posh*, and *napoo*. Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear would have enjoyed, and added to, these interlopers.

The business man, or the young typist, in the corner of the train compartment, counting square spaces with a pencil, are new modern devotees of the Dictionary: the vogue of the cross-word puzzle has had a very stimulating effect upon the disposal of the larger kinds of standard dictionary. It is perhaps safe to suppose that some competitors have lost their chance of prize-money by becoming absorbed in the book's items for their own interest's sake, and have forgotten all about a word of three letters meaning a domestic pet. The perpetual brisk collision of the mind there with novel words and locutions can while away an hour or two happily, not the less because probably thirty per cent. of the words are not for common use, under pain of not being understood even by the educated, or of the imputation of pedantry. I have seen a Scot glow, after years of absence from his glen, at the word 'forjeskit . . . (dis) jasked. Worn out by toil, jaded,' and at 'glar, or glaur . . . slime or mud, to make muddy,' and at 'glaik, prob. connected with gleek . . . a trick, a hoax, a childish toy; a flash, a glance of the eye'; and thereupon he roved after hundreds of Scottish and north English old dialect words, with Scandinavian and Icelandic or Celtic origins—thus forgoing a winner's cheque but

winning pleasure of another sort. It is a good game, as full of mysterious vistas and beckoning clues as hide-and-seek in a forest. How fascinating this word-hunting can be, Trench showed in his companionable *Study of Words* in 1851, a book which you might fairly call a chatty, discursive dictionary; its vogue may be guessed by the fact that it went through twenty-one editions in the thirty years following publication, and it has been reissued often since with amplifications.

Let nobody waive this fireside game of word-hunting aside as a pursuit of shadows. Words are things. They create situations, good and evil. The Greek language had but one term for 'reason' and 'word'; for what is man's word but his reason coming forth that it may behold itself? The mere knowledge of the world which a loitering through an ordinary dictionary will give is unbelievable. At intervals of two minutes on the average, I have found an entry which is mighty pertinent to some business, or private, problem, and saves me a costly blunder; puts me right upon some embarrassing mispronunciation; brings up to date some legal term (altered by legislation I had forgotten); mentions some new diagnosis of an ailment, and the favoured regimen; presents suddenly—and this is a joy—a word I felt must exist, but which has teased me by its hiding for the last five years; and, in general, keeps one muttering, 'Really!' 'Fancy that,' and 'Well, how odd.' This would please the dictionary-makers, for they are human themselves: how human, is shown in the preface to one post-War specimen: 'The four years' orgy of crime, barbarity and violence was of itself enough to add to our vocabulary many words and expressions that will long be kept alive in memoirs and histories of this time.' It adds, that the words and phrases thus created were far too many to be

brought into the body of the work and had to go to make a supplement, virtually another dictionary ! The invasions were from America and the Dominions—and India—from wireless, films, aviation, engineering, and a score of other sources. It is of no use to complain : the tree will insist on growing. Only exact words *can* perpetuate discoveries. They are as necessary as peel to an orange, or a vessel to contain wine. All is lost without the word.

Should you ever feel intimidated by a learned man, safely you may correct this feeling by remembering your dictionary at home, and murmuring : 'Dear me, he's a child in half those matters.' And if the same book impeaches *you* of ignorance, at least it does so silently, proposes a gradual cure, and tactfully agrees to being consulted secretly, thus saving you many a humiliating verbal application to somebody who raises his eyebrows at your neglected education in some detail. And—shall we all agree to be frank with each other, and confess it :—we all must have some culpable blind spots, little Saharas of no-information, and a few Dolomites of delusion. Really, short of publishing our shame in company, or paying for a correspondence course, what is there to be done about it but to interview the kindest, briefest and most universal book within hand-reach ? The good dictionary magicians are keen never to bore you ; they whet the appetite by brevity ; some beat the fairy-tale or the illustrated paper with little woodcuts or photogravures—of Kaffir kraals, volcanoes, animals, native costumes, flowers, ships, weapons, portraits, views, scientific implements, engineering feats, maps, famous paintings, musical instruments, charts of population, produce and wealth, first-aid treatment, crowns and coronets, medals, coins, trees, trophies and typography. Do we ever quite get past the picture-story stage, in certain moods ?

Let us merely imagine what the thirsty, wide-awake minds of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Newton—or even Pepys—would make of such a companion if they had had such things. The new ideas, the fresh imagery, the variety of creation, it would have suggested ! Johnson hoped that his seven years of drudgery would prelude another burst of literary greatness ; and sure enough, with his help—and that of the French Revolution and so on—a Romantic Movement did follow. Listen to him :

‘ We may no longer yield the palm of philology, without a contest, to the nations of the continent. The chief glory of every people arises from its authors. . . . I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble, if, by my assistance, foreign nations and distant ages gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth ; if my labours afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle.

‘ No dictionary of a living tongue can ever be perfect, since, while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding and some falling away. He whose design includes whatever language can express, must often speak of what he does not understand, and will often faint with weariness under a task which Scaliger compares to the labour of the anvil and the mine. . . . If it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed ; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, yet it may gratify curiosity to inform the world that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance from the learned, and without any patronage of the great ; not in the soft obscurities of retirement or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amid inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. . . . I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise.’

There is the human note which we moderns say we like. Johnson, the maker of our first good dictionary, had a soul ; he knew that, by the iron that had entered into it ! Hence his definition of Pension (long before he was offered one) :

‘ An allowance made to anyone without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state-hireling for treason to his country.’

And of oats :

‘ A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.’

Whatever was said previously of the liberating effect of guide-books is true, with a slight difference, of these dictionaries and encyclopædias. The remedy for too much ego in our cosmos is—more cosmos in our ego. ‘ The universal is the true antiseptic,’ and there are few troubles which pester us and stagnate in our minds which cannot be blown away by opening the windows of a good dictionary. Morbidity cannot stand up to the wind caused by the infinity of things. But all this, only if it is read not as a book of reference but as the *Diary of Mankind*, the log of his voyage, his trek through the immensities of experience.

Marooned in a desert, or secluded as a political prisoner, a man might make shift to live a decent mental life with the unusual literary fare I have named. A friend who for years lived leagues away from others contrived to exist intelligently on a weather-expurgated Bible, three ancient New York magazines and papers, and a little pocket calendar with quotations. At an inn on a wet day one may find it possible to read through the local paper—meetings of cricket clubs one will never see, a presentation to the retiring surveyor, and letters to the editor on the proposals for a new recreation ground. It is said that Tennyson was once caught under

such conditions, so engrossed that he regretted not having the next copy of the paper to learn whether one of the girls in the story was confirmed. Lubbock was once bluntly asked: 'Have *you* read your "hundred best books"?' He vowed that he had—adding, 'Mostly while I have waited for trains at my village station.' A former acquaintance of mine, now dead, when sentenced to death (for a political cause) in a distant country, spent what he believed to be his last fortnight in—mathematics: 'I was never calmer or more self-forgetting,' he said; 'I even put on a little weight.' Mr. John Burns told me once that his interest in economics was first roused on the banks of the Niger, whither he went as foreman engineer, by a *Wealth of Nations* which an African missionary had left on the ground. It is remarkable what delight can be got from 'books that are no books,' to use the phrase of Charles Lamb, an epicure in these matters; who, however, would have relaxed his own rule if his age had possessed the guide-books, the souvenirs, and the good topography of to-day. Some hardy souls can face up to a Bradshaw, not for actual travel only, but as matter for retrospect. But I cannot say of this, as I can of the other out-of-the-way reading referred to, How often

*'in lonely rooms, and mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart.'*

Of a good gazetteer, on the other hand, this *can* be said, especially if it have illustrations, however small, for these are exciting little port-holes looking out on the world; ventilators of the imagination. It may seem, to an onlooker, like waste time, but information got idly and disinterestedly stays with us when facts crammed for an examination

notoriously do not. Boswell once caught Johnson—not composing the dictionary, but whiling away time by eating roasted apples and perusing a History of Birmingham. 'But, sir,' protested Boswell, 'do you not find it dull?' 'Why, yes, sir, it is dull,' said the leviathan of lexicologists; 'and yet there are notable things in it.' Nobody can fairly damn with such half-praise the dictionaries, Johnson's or anyone else's. Detective stories pall at length; history at times becomes too controversial and troublous; books on medicine or health infect some of us with half the ailments named; on fiction one cannot live—though some ladies appear to do so, perhaps as a course of mental slimming; the daily paper occupies its half-hour well enough; and so, as light relief from the classics and the 'large still books,' what better than gazetteer or dictionary or encyclopædia of dates, events, terms and places?

A friend of mine who was often Kipling's host used to tell me how Kipling loved nothing better than to lie face downward on the hearth with some dictionary (preferably technical—military, naval, engineering), or a treatise of native words and races, or a gazetteer of towns and places; and there by the hour he would absorb the alien *patois* and slang and specialisms. No wonder his books are so 'knowing,' and that experts over a range of subjects cannot catch him napping. When asked by his host whether he hunted words on any plan, he replied: 'No. You've to treat your mind as a sportsman does his setter and let it run—if he is to bring home any game.' That is the secret. To fetch wide circles is to get home best, just as in the kindred type of book in looking up Great Britain you are decoyed by Great Wall of China, Great Salt Lake, Great Smoky Mountains, Great Western Railway, Greece, Greenland—and so back home via Greenwich. Unless, of course, you scamper off again

via Gretna Green and Grime's dyke to the Grindelwald, the Grison, Guadeloupe and Guatemala ; and return, feeling mentally breathed and tanned. Good sport, taken leisurely.

Dryden, of whom Dr. Johnson hastily said that he found our language brick and left it marble, found the study of words a liberal education and amusement.

'It is said that I Latinise too much. When I find an English word significant and sounding, I neither borrow from the Latin or any other language ; but when I want at home, I seek abroad. I carry not out the treasure of the nation which is never to return, but what I bring from Italy I spend in England. Here it remains and here it circulates. I trade both with the living and the dead for the enrichment of our native language. If I find a great word in a classic, I propose it to be naturalised. Yet if too many are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.'

This is why English is the most adequate living language—Saxon-Celtic-Greek-Latin-Norman : just as we who use it are Picts, Gaels, Cymric, Saxon, Dane, Norman, Fleming, and Huguenot inextricably.

The world is best taken not as an arena for competition, but as a pageantry of ideas, people, places and experiences. It belongs to those who *see* and enjoy it, not to those who have to drudge, conquer or push goods in it. Over the books I have named, a man can cheerfully say—

*'For me your tributary stores combine,  
Creation's heir. The world, the world is mine.'*

## AN UNSENTIMENTAL JOURNEY.

BY AIMÉE CADELL.

WE started on the first of April, a day which gave the foolhardy and slightly reckless touch to our adventure that we felt it required. Our objective was the Austrian Tyrol. Nothing more definite and nothing more exciting.

'But where does the adventure come in?' said my niece Joan, who had flown there several times. Judged by her standards, of course, it didn't come in at all. If adventure necessitates a hazardous and difficult journey, then ours certainly was none. If, on the other hand, it means the lure of the unexpected, chance meetings, and amusing happenings, then for us every moment of our three weeks proved to be an adventure.

'After all, Joan,' I replied, 'you must remember we were two middle-aged women, neither of whom had ever motored on the Continent before, and only one of whom had even a smattering of German. We did not want thrills and hair-breadth escapes. We had enough of them in the War. Besides, adventure is not so much enduring the unpleasant, however unexpected it may be, as surprise and joy at some new thing.'

'For me,' answered Joan, 'adventure will always mean lions in the path.'

We left it at that.

The rain was pitiless when we set off, and a hundred and thirty-five miles to Dover was a long way to go. 'It can't possibly last like this,' said Lauretta. I agreed. We little knew! On our return three weeks later we arrived in

just such a downpour, with this difference : that before we had gone more than a few miles it had turned to snow. Such is our English climate.

At Dover we found we had an hour to wait. Lauretta went off in search of postcards and stamps, while I stayed with the car. Ever since I can remember, my possessions have had an inconvenient and agitating way of acquiring personalities of their own. The car, I felt sure, must be anxious as to how and when she was going to be slung through the air and put on board the steamer, and it was up to me to see her through the ordeal. This peculiarity of mine makes the loss of any belongings doubly distressing. My spectacles, left at Hurlingham last week, are still calling for help, and I can never forget the drowning cries of a beloved felt hat that blew off in mid-Atlantic. Only when the car was safely on board, therefore, could I concentrate on the Belgian cat in which the embarkation officer had been trying for some time to make me take an interest.

'E's so savage no one can't go near 'im,' he said, pointing at a tortoiseshell-and-white cat lying under a truck.

'Oh, I must go and talk to it,' exclaimed Lauretta, regardless of my protestations that sooner than doctor a cat-bite all the way, I would leave her behind.

The cat really was rather a remarkable animal. It came over in a Belgian steamer and had so far withstood all efforts to make it return to its native country. There have been no rats on Dover quay since its arrival. Occasionally it goes up to London, perhaps in search of a fresh hunting ground, but it is known by the authorities at Victoria, who always send it back by the next boat train.

After a peaceful crossing to Ostend we slept that night at the Gare Terminus in luxurious rooms with a great deal of gilt about them, and upholstered in red velvet. Private

bathrooms too. The last time we ever afforded ourselves such a luxury. I was up betimes next morning and found the way with difficulty to the garage which was some distance off. Having attended to the bodily needs of the car, calculating petrol for the first time in litres instead of gallons, I drove cautiously to the hotel, very conscious of the warning I found pasted on the wind-screen by the ever-watchful A.A., 'Drive to the right.'

At nine o'clock off we went, again in torrential rain, but we were abroad, motoring into the unknown, and nothing mattered. The road to Bruges was like a racing track. Not so the *pavé* which succeeded it to Ghent. In Brussels we halted and bought our picnic lunch and went on to Namur. Now the A.A. had provided us with a perfectly clear and apparently straightforward route from Namur to Trier, but it eluded us twice, as the clearest of routes have a way of doing when Lauretta and I motor together. The first time, believing ourselves to be near the village of Marche, we stopped and ate our lunch during a cessation of the rain, under some trees and below some high and formidable-looking rocks. Actually we were at Marche-des-Dames and were peacefully resting below the rock from which King Albert fell to his death. Back we went to Namur, and found the right road, only to lose it again before very long. This only meant that we went by Arlon and Luxembourg, which was not the quickest way to Trier, but as it was no day for sight-seeing and we were anxious to arrive before dark, we grudged every extra mile.

I may say here that before leaving I had been presented by the A.A. with a brown document which they gave me to understand was more precious than life itself and had to be stamped at every frontier if I and my car were to be allowed back into England ! This was my Customs Carnet.

At the Belgian frontier a polite official who came running out to the car refused to look at anything but our passports. He took them away, returned them in about half a minute and waved us on. As he would have none of the Customs Carnet, and as I was in no mood to delay, on we went. At Wasserbillig, the German frontier, we got out into the rain. The Germans greeted us with faces grim as death, took the Customs Carnet, rejected our passports and slammed the door in our faces. When they came out of their shelter and returned us the Customs Carnet, we murmured something about 'Geld' and passports, but they told us to go, so go we did without any money declaration. This negligence on their part was to cause us considerable inconvenience later on.

Trier enchanted us. The morning was fine and our bedroom windows looked out on to the magnificent old Roman gate known as the Porta Nigra. We set out after breakfast to find the cathedral. Turning down Sternstrasse we both came to an abrupt halt and gazed spellbound in front of us. The street was short, narrow and dark, and opened suddenly on to a wide market place, gay with flowers and coloured umbrellas. In the bright sunshine it made a brilliant foreground to the wonderful cathedral in pink stone, whose eleventh-century walls towered above it. I shall never forget the beauty of the exterior in that perfect setting. Unfortunately the interior was extremely disappointing. We wandered on to the Roman baths, all in the same lovely pink stone, admiring the magnolia trees in the gardens as we passed. Of course we ended by losing our way, and were later in starting that day's journey than we had intended. It was a lovely drive through what I think must be some of the best of the German country-side. The pasture lands seemed to roll on for miles through hilly and well-wooded

uplands until they faded into the blue of the horizon. Very different from the patchwork effect of English hedges. The villages with their gaily painted houses in blues, greens and mauves, and the soft colours worn by the peasants, were an endless delight to Lauretta. Some of the houses were festooned with Nazi flags, which gave them a curiously Oriental appearance. Driving between little wooden houses with the Swastika fluttering from their balconies, one might almost have been in a bazaar in China.

By the middle of the afternoon we found ourselves high up in a lovely pine forest, but with a dense fog descending upon us. I began to get slightly nervous, but as we got lower down the fog turned into the heavy rain with which we were now so familiar. I had meant to reach Heidelberg that day, but we very soon realised that Mannheim would have to be our destination. Now arriving at a large town where you neither know your way about, nor the rules of the road, is not much fun, especially when it is pouring with rain, dark, and the reflection of the lights in the wet pavements dazzling in the extreme. Also the German signposts have a way of pointing diagonally when actually they mean you to go straight on. This caused us to deviate from our course, and instead of going boldly across the huge bridge over the Rhine, we found ourselves in dense traffic in the Hauptstrasse of Ludwigshafen. We tried to turn and were told it was 'verboten.' It would have been a hopeless proposition anyhow. We turned into a side street and found it was 'one way' and the wrong way at that. By the time we got back to the bridge and into Mannheim, I was feeling desperate, and suddenly catching sight of our hotel on the other side of a sort of Piccadilly Circus, I made a bee line for it, regardless of the frantic gesticulations of three fat Germans on the pavement of whom I had asked

the way. We got safely across, however, and nobody came after us to run us in, so all was well.

That night in Mannheim remains in my mind as the one blot on our trip. The noise of trams and the incessant talk of people who seemed to walk about in the streets all night made sleep impossible for me. Overtiredness no doubt had something to do with it, but I wished I had known of the wax balls Lauretta always carried with her, which she said when put in her ears enabled her to sleep through anything, even the noise of an automatic drill. A great idea.

The car had spent the night in a huge garage that, judging by the equestrian frescoes on the walls, would appear to have once been a riding-school. The previous day's journey had made her alarmingly hot and a change of engine oil was advised. An approving look and a comment of 'Owstin, Sehr gut nicht wahr?' made her amenable to the suggestion, and for the first time she submitted to German handling. How it rained that day! It was as if the skies had opened. I did think the sun might have shone just that once to let me see once again the beauty of the blossom in the Neckar valley, a memory of my schooldays. But it was not to be. We reached the old town of Ulm early in the afternoon. Only one incident on that drive remains in my mind. A large lorry was lying overturned by the side of the road, with its load of bricks flung all over the place, and a number of cars were drawn up to see what the damage had been. A little girl was evidently making the most of her opportunity while her parents were absorbed in the accident. A quaint little figure, holding an umbrella high over her head, she darted wildly about, frantically gathering cowslips as if her life depended on it.

Ulm, I believe, is a fascinating place, and in any other circumstances we might have found it so; but as we got

tired of wading in inches of water, we gave it up and went back to our hotel. Dinner was a strange meal. The room seemed full of smoke, men were playing cards, and German officers drinking beer. It was quite full. We sat down at a table marked 'reserviert' because there was nowhere else to sit. Presently we were joined by the fattest man I have ever seen and his wife. They greeted us cheerfully, not resenting our presence at their table in the least. The wife ordered an excellent dinner for herself, but all the husband was allowed apparently was an occasional titbit off her fork. Their friends arrived luckily just as we had finished, and though with great politeness they pressed us to stay, we got up and went to bed. The next day was Sunday, and we were eagerly looking forward to our first sight of Austria and the mountains, in spite of the fact that torrential rain greeted us once more.

'When it does rain on the Continent,' murmured Lauretta, 'it is ten times worse than it is at home.' I doubted this statement, but did not contradict it, as poor Lauretta had suffered from the rain more than I had. With the exception of one afternoon she had spent her time mopping up the drips that came through the so-called sunshine roof and wringing a sopping duster out of the window. It was the only way in which our gallant little car let us down, and she had some excuse for it. We stopped to eat our lunch in lovely pine woods within sight of the snow mountains. It was gloriously fresh and the rain actually stopped for a short time. Feeling revived and strengthened we proceeded to Mittenwald, where we were to cross the frontier into Austria. Before leaving, I had been advised to stay at Mittenwald as a good centre for walks in the Bavarian Alps. How glad I was that I had not taken that advice. The usually peaceful village of the violin-makers was an armed camp.

Soldiers, soldiers, everywhere ! We crawled along, anxiously looking for the Customs house. Suddenly 'Halt !' in a voice like a thunderclap, and we applied all our brakes. The owner of the voice smiled apologetically at the fright he had given us and beckoned to us to follow him. He smiled no longer. There seemed to be something wrong with all our papers. One officer appeared with our passports, protesting volubly that they had not been stamped. Another found the Customs Carnet also not in order ; and when on the top of everything else the original man discovered we had no declaration of money, he wrung his hands in despair. A really fierce-looking official put us through a sort of third-degree examination ; and at this point Lauretta, thinking we were about to be arrested, began protesting vigorously in English, which didn't help matters, as they couldn't understand. At last we were allowed to go, and with what a sigh of relief we got out of Germany. It was as if a beautiful country, full of kindly, well-meaning people, had somehow got into the clutches of some evil power. A few yards farther on and we were with Austrian Customs officers, whose politeness seemed all the greater by contrast. They offered us seats while the papers were being signed, did everything with the minimum of fuss, and actually seemed pleased to see us. Back in our car, we moved off into the Austrian Tyrol at last, and as we lifted up our eyes to the hills our hearts sang.

It was with a feeling of satisfaction, almost amounting to achievement, that we drove into Innsbrück. We had done what we set out to do, and I imagine the feeling is much the same whether one has accomplished a walk from London to Brighton, or climbed Mount Everest. It only remained to find the perfect spot in which to spend a week before we had to cross Europe again. The Gasthaus zur Goldener

Rose in old Innsbrück, seemed a good beginning. It was the kind of hostelry in which we delighted to stay. But towns were not for us. Next morning we went up to Igls, where the sun was blazing and the views magnificent. Up and up we walked, till near the village of Patsch we came upon the perfect camping ground, and decided that here was the place we had come so far to seek. But alas, no one would have us. The only hotel was closed, and our efforts to persuade either the proprietor or the caretakers of a perfectly situated villa near by to take us in were equally unavailing. There was no time to lose. Igls must give us a resting-place. The black-coated waiter and croaking wire-less in the lounge of the 'Park Hotel' filled us with dismay, and we fled to the local photographer, who sent us to our good friends the Baiers, in whose comfortable villa we spent a happy week. There were three other guests besides ourselves, a young French couple, and a solitary Dutch lady. The French wife seemed to spend most of her time in Innsbrück and would arrive back very late for dinner. She would burst into the little dining-room, stand for a moment smiling at us all, then rush forward to embrace her husband, bursting into a torrent of conversation the while. We all felt the stimulus of that gay vitality which is so peculiarly French. Mizzi, the servant, with her brilliant jade-green skirt, loud voice and beaming countenance, did the entire work of the house as well as cooking and serving the meals. If the evening meal was long in coming, and indeed we never knew when to expect it, it was impossible to blame Mizzi when one thought of all she had to do. So Lauretta and I used to knit and read, and the Dutch lady play innumerable games of patience, while waiting for our dinner. She occupied a sort of raised pulpit in a corner of the room, while we and the French couple had small tables beside the walls,

whose only decorations consisted of stuffed eagles and stoats, though there was of course a crucifix in one corner. It was a very odd room. If, however, the dining-room was more queer than beautiful, our bedrooms left nothing to be desired with their perfect beds, hot and cold water, and balconies looking on to the loveliest of views.

We walked for miles in that lovely country, going out for the whole day with books and knitting and lunching off omelets and wine in country inns. Our only expedition by car was to the Aachensee. Our kind host was very apprehensive about it. There would be snow, he said, it would also be very steep and it was too early in the year to go. Probably all quite true, we replied, but nevertheless we were going. He was right about the steepness. The car boiled and panted on her ascent but gallantly took us to the top, and what a reward was ours. There lay the Aachensee like a brilliant jewel, surrounded by the snows. Never could it possibly have looked more lovely. So much for taking our chance. I sat down at once to try and put an idea of that unbelievable colour on paper. Quite unsuccessfully, of course. The water was a blend of turquoise and emerald, perhaps the blue of a matrix opal would describe it best, while the banks of the lake were studded with the little gentian 'verna,' the loveliest of its kind. All too soon our week at Igls came to an end. We had planned to return over the Arlberg Pass, which Thos. Cook had assured us was open. Once more our hosts were discouraging and seemed touchingly concerned for our safety, but we felt our star was in the ascendant, and bad weather a thing of the past.

The day of our departure was brilliant. A day of such exquisite beauty that the journey would have been well worth while for that alone. We sailed along, pausing at

the summit of the Pass, near St. Christophe, to watch a group of skiers practising. I turned to look at the mountains we were leaving, murmured to Lauretta, 'Look your last on all things lovely,' and gently moved on round a corner. Scarcely had we gone two hundred yards when we found the road ahead of us had not been cleared of snow, and a little farther on still a big car had skidded right across it and was perilously near the precipitous edge. The occupant was a Belgian with his wife and grown-up son. I do not know how long they had been in that plight, but somehow they had managed to get hold of a man with a spade, who, however, did not seem to be doing much good. They did manage to get the car slightly straighter so that I could just have got past had not an Austrian car at that moment driven up and come to a standstill on the other side. The driver was both incompetent and truculent and insisted on my passing the Belgian car first and going as near the edge of the precipice as I could. This I did, though it made his own task more difficult, as he now had to pass me as well as the Belgian car. About four women got out of his car and a white poodle, the latter giving a grotesque touch to the situation by dancing about all over the place in a disconcerting way, nobody caring in the least what happened to it. It was a proper mix-up, everyone talking volubly at the same time, and if it had not been for the arrival of the snow plough with four strong men on board, I cannot think what would have happened. I trembled for the fate of our little car standing on the brink of a precipice, over which a touch would have sent her. After much manœuvring, however, and with the help of the men who put on a spare wheel with chains, the Austrian got past, and we breathed again, though I did not enjoy starting my own car on that slippery surface and so near the edge.

When we were safely down, Lauretta and I bathed our faces and hands in a stream, and lay flat on our backs in ferns and heather by the side of the road and rested. We then went on to Bludenz, where we spent two nights. As we got there we met a funeral procession, consisting apparently of the entire population, streaming through the narrow streets, headed by the priests and chief mourners. Perhaps it was an unfortunate omen; anyhow, our luck changed rather noticeably afterwards. We stopped at the Gasthaus der Eiserne Kreuz. There was a billiard table in the dining-room and it was in constant use while we dined. The Austrian variety of the game consists of making cannons, there being no pockets in the table. A fat young man in a red sweater, who I afterwards saw in charge of a petrol pump down the road, seemed to carry all before him.

Next day we explored the Montafon valley. Though beautiful in its way we did not think it could compare with the grand scenery through which we had come. The following day we said good-bye to Austria and crossed the German frontier at Lindau. Our intention had been to spend two nights in the Black Forest, but the moment we got into Germany the skies became overcast and we never saw the sun again while we were there. After a night at Holzsteig, about ten miles short of Freiburg, we awakened to find it snowing. This gradually became worse till it developed into a real blizzard, and after the worst drive in my experience we managed to reach Heidelberg with the car a sheet of ice. A party of English schoolboys were caught in the same blizzard, very close to where we passed, and five of them lost their lives.

From Heidelberg we went to Mainz, from there following the banks of the Rhine, to Coblenz. Enormous army lorries passed and repassed us, the rain came down in torrents,

and neither of us saw any beauty in the Rhine. Lauretta was distinctly disappointed. What was the matter with it or with us? As a schoolgirl I had come down the Rhine in a steamer to Rotterdam, finding in it all the romance and loveliness of which I had read. That memory has now been spoiled.

Coblenz was a pleasant town, and in the evening as we walked along a beautiful avenue of limes by the riverside, our spirits rose and Germany seemed a better place.

Lauretta was anxious to see Brussels and we decided to spend our last morning there, so we intended reaching it next day. Accordingly I filled up the car with petrol to the value of all the German marks in my possession, having been told I would not be allowed to take them out of the country. This was all very well, but it left me without a single pfennig for any emergency. We had not contemplated any emergency, certainly not the one with which we were confronted. A hilly, lonely road, across desolate country so deep in snow that we could only go ten miles an hour most of the way, and that in blinding rain that threatened to turn to snow. After ninety miles of exhausting driving, perhaps I was not at my best; anyhow, I turned just too late at a signpost, could not get the car round, and was suddenly faced with a wall that seemed to spring from nowhere and into it we went. Down it came like a pack of cards. Our buffer was bent, and headlights smashed, but nothing worse, though I felt we had had a narrow escape.

At Huy we had a rest and some refreshment, and proceeded to Brussels with spirits somewhat damped by this unfortunate incident. Having damaged the poor car on the last day, when she had behaved so well and never let us down, mattered at the moment far more to me than the fact that I had nearly killed Lauretta. The garage at Brussels made

the car look respectable again, and we reached Ostend in a downpour about five o'clock, having spent the morning wandering about Brussels. We chose a comfortable if humble hotel, and guided by the porter I drove the car into a garage to be greeted by a cheerful 'Hullo, back again?' and behold, it was the same one I had left her in on our arrival. That evening, as we were reading in the lounge, the manager came up to us with a face as long as a fiddle. 'Madame,' he said, 'I think there has been some mistake.' My heart sank. Whatever was the matter? Which of our errors could be going to come back on us now? 'You have entered in the register to have been born in nineteen hundred and thirty-six.' Lauretta laughed aloud while I rectified the error.

Our friend the embarkation officer at Dover also remembered us and greeted us warmly, and so ended our little adventure. The friendliness we met with in every place makes me long to be off abroad in a car again. Knowledge can be acquired, but experiences must be lived, and memories are personal things that cannot be passed on. To my mind they are the best investment we can any of us make. Good and bad, all are enriching, and many of them are golden.

## TWO POEMS.

## THE JUNIPERS.

*Gray the slow sky darkens  
Above the downland track.  
Closing the long valley  
Rises a hill's smooth back,*

*Its slope all darkly sprinkled  
With ancient junipers,  
Each a small, secret tree :  
There not a breath stirs.*

*I fear those waiting shapes  
Of wry, blue-berried wood.  
They make a twilight in my mind,  
As if they drained my blood,*

*As if a spirit were prisoned  
Within each writhen stem,  
And no one knows their kindred  
Nor what frustrated them.*

*Along the empty valley  
Like a ghost go I ;  
My footsteps and my beating heart  
Nothing signify,*

*Lost into nameless ages  
That come, slow cloud on cloud,  
From history's beginning  
And all the future shroud.*

## STILL MORNING.

Here alone I sit,  
And suddenly I seem  
With all I am on earth  
To have become a dream,

Mingling with all the dreams  
That wander through the air  
Out of the souls of men,  
None knows or guesses where.

No human sound around !  
Yet the air is full  
Of vast want, sighs, desires,  
Hopes, invisible.

Alone each thinks to be,  
Yet separate is none.  
Of such a quivering web  
The human soul is spun.

Loose as the idle clouds  
My thoughts float as they may.  
Now I am here, and now  
Ten thousand miles away.

LAURENCE BINYON.

## WILLIAM IV : THE FORGOTTEN KING.

BY DERECK HUDSON

### I.

POPULAR opinion in the last hundred years has not been particularly kind to the memory of King William IV. The general tendency, however, has been rather to ignore him altogether than to revive the storm of satirical abuse that whirled around his somewhat wooden features (Charles Greville said that his head was 'shaped like a pine-apple') during certain periods of his life. This neglect of one who had no great intellect, and who often behaved foolishly, may be justified in part : but at least the redeeming features spoken of by the *Annual Register* for 1837, 'the kindness, the openness, the simplicity of tastes and habits which so remarkably distinguished him,' are not to be lightly disregarded. He was certainly an eccentric, and no paragon of morals, but he won the affection of men : Nelson liked him as a sailor ; and sceptical Glenbervie once remarked that 'his manner was frank yet dignified—even interesting and entertaining.' Perhaps it was Madame von Bülow who really hit upon his most dominant characteristic, when she said that he was 'altogether such a *cheerful King*.'

William Henry, the third son of George III and Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, was born at Buckingham House on August 21, 1765. There is little news of his early days. Fitzgerald records a lavish distribution of porter to the crowd at his christening ; and he came forward as a

pioneer by being successfully vaccinated at the age of two. The rest is silence—and a succession of tutors, Messrs. Arnold and Majendie giving place to the Swiss Colonel Budé, whose 'sarcastic sneer' was so objectionable to Fanny Burney, but whose religion, according to one of his biographers, 'was founded on the firm base of unadulterated Christianity.'

At the age of thirteen William began to attract the attention of visitors to Kew and Windsor as a lively and intelligent boy. His 'surprisingly manly and clever conversation' won Bishop Butler's heart, and Mrs. Chapone found him 'sensible and engaging.' George III soon decided that the temptations of Court life, which were proving so disastrous to his elder brothers, should not be allowed to endanger his character also. Negotiations were entered into with the Admiralty; and on June 15, 1779, the boy was dressed in a midshipman's low-crowned hat, blue jacket and trousers, and taken to Spithead, whence he presently followed his 'hair trunk' into the murky depths of Admiral Digby's flagship, the *Prince George*.

Life in the navy of Marryat's day was not easy. William might have been excused if his heart failed him as he climbed down the steep ladder into the steerage, smelt the stench of bilge water for the first time, stumbled through the litter of boots, bottles, dirty clothes, on the floor of the 'berth' which he was to share with half a dozen others, and sat down to an evening meal of small beer and 'sea biscuit.' On his father's instructions, he got no preferential treatment; indeed, the fact of his royal parentage was probably more of a hindrance than a help. Yet he seems to have taken his initiation well enough; for when someone mockingly enquired by what name he was rated in the ship's books, he stoutly replied that he 'was entered as Prince William Henry, but you may call me William Guelph'; and later showed

himself so pugnacious towards anyone who annoyed him that he soon became a very popular 'mid.'

Towards the end of the year the ships of Admiral Rodney's squadron, the *Prince George* among them, took part in operations for the relief of Gibraltar, and assisted at the defeat of a Spanish detachment under Don Juan de Langara. Later the disappointed Spaniard paid a visit to Admiral Digby, and was introduced to the Prince. The incident is thus described by Lord Keith: 'The Spaniard, astonished to see the son of a monarch doing the duty of a petty officer, exclaimed, "Well does Great Britain merit the empire of the seas, when the humblest stations in her navy are filled by princes of the blood!"'

From the great number of flattering anecdotes available, it is difficult to obtain a balanced view of the young sailor. 'In the most inclement seasons, in dark and stormy nights, he went aloft to hand or reef the top-sails,' says Ralfe in his *Naval Biography*, 'and had the character of being the best midshipman on board the ship.' But during the following year, while the *Prince George* was attached to the Channel fleet, frequent opportunities for shore leave—involving, as they always did, gay parties with his brothers at Vauxhall and Ranelagh—seem to have had a bad effect on his work. His father became alarmed, ordered a change of ship, and sent him for a cruise off the North American coast.

He was away from England for nearly two years. In 1782 we find him at the West Indies, in Lord Hood's flagship, the *Barfleur*. Reception, entertainments, and 'respectful addresses' now awaited him wherever he landed. At Port Royal, Jamaica, the merchants and planters raised a corps of cavalry 'for the express purpose of attending him,' to which they gave the name of 'Prince William Henry's regiment.' From Jamaica he proceeded to New York, and

on landing there became the first English Prince of the Blood to set foot in America.

At that time the country was in the closing stages of the War of Independence. Not unnaturally, any move that might create a diversion, and so hasten the end of the conflict, was eagerly looked for by both sides. Thus it happened that the sight of this amiable, highly important young man, wandering round the city of New York without a guard, proved a severe temptation to a certain Colonel Matthias Ogden. Colonel Ogden wrote to George Washington, suggesting that it would be a good idea to kidnap the Prince. On March 28, 1782, Washington replied :

Sir,

*The spirit of enterprise, so conspicuous in your plan for surprising in their quarters and bringing off the Prince William Henry and Admiral Digby merits applause ; and you have my authority to make the attempt, in any manner and at such a time, as your own judgment shall direct. I am fully persuaded that it is unnecessary to caution you against offering insult or indignity to the persons of the Prince and Admiral, should you be so fortunate as to capture them . . .*

Colonel Ogden was not so fortunate. William remained at large ; soon he was off to sea again : in the following year he sailed back to England in the *Fortunée*.

## II.

'The transition from the orlopdeck of a man of war to the Court of St. James,' says Robert Huish, William's long-winded biographer, 'must have been as striking as the sudden light of heaven bursting suddenly upon an individual, who has been for some time confined in total darkness.' The transition may have been striking, but it failed to bring

about a rather desirable change in William's demeanour, for he now trod the salons of St. James's with the same nonchalance and seaman-like roll as he once strode the 'orlop-deck' of the *Barfleur*. In short, he wanted manners; and therefore it was resolved, as soon as he had passed his examination for third lieutenant, that he should pay a prolonged visit to Germany, under the guidance of Colonel (now General) Budé and a gentleman named Captain Merrick. Queen Charlotte thought a great deal of Teuton discipline, and hoped for good results: Huish accuses her of scheming to divest her son of the 'noble and independent character of the Englishman,' and put upon him the 'stiff, haughty, and supercilious carriage of the German prince'!

The party left Buckingham House on July 31, 1783. The crossing from Greenwich was rough; but the Prince, as Huish observed, 'was "every inch a sailor," and bore the buffeting of the waves with that marked coolness and indifference which, under similar circumstances, are the sailor's invariable characteristics.'

They landed at Stade, and went on to Hanover, where they were joined by William's brother, the Bishop of Osnaburg.<sup>1</sup> The days passed very pleasantly at Hanover. After many languid yawns and protests, the royal brothers allowed themselves to be dressed by their valets at eight o'clock; in the morning they paid one or two calls, or strolled over to the stables to look at the famous stud of cream-coloured horses; then wandered along to the *marktplatz* to inspect a few troops, before sitting down to an enormous meal with some high official which lasted all afternoon. The evenings were devoted to gambling,

<sup>1</sup> Frederick August, later Duke of York, the second son of George III (d. 1827). Through the influence of his father as Elector of Hanover, he was appointed Bishop of Osnaburg at the age of six months. To what extent his diocese benefited by his ministrations is not recorded.

dancing, or the theatre. No wonder that Captain Merrick, who was trying to make William study Vauban on Fortifications, despaired of the educational results of the trip.

The Grand Tour continued. At Berlin, Frederick the Great was sadly disappointed that William had not read *Candide*: William admired the Emperor's coiffure, particularly the long tapering tail with its famous curl, and resolved never again to appear in a bag-wig. At Lunenburg, it seemed that he was going to have his first taste of romance, for he drove the beautiful Maria Schindbach behind one of his father's cream-coloured horses at a *Schlittenfahrt*, and waltzed with her every night; but Maria had become attached to Captain Merrick, who in due course married her; and, when he got back to Hanover, the young ladies of the Court said that William 'seemed to know as much about love as an oyster.' However, there is good reason to believe that he had his 'affairs.'

The traveller returned to England in the spring of 1785. The same evening that he arrived home, the Prince of Wales came round to Buckingham House, and invited him to join one of his parties at Carlton House.

'Eh, what?' exclaimed the King. 'Take William away? take William away? he shan't go!—he shan't go!—just arrived from Hanover—want to know how things are going on there—fine stud! fine stud!'

In vain his sons pleaded with him to reconsider his decision.

'Shan't go! shan't go!' said their father, '—better with his mother to-night.'

For the next few years William lived the regular life of a lieutenant in the Navy. In 1786 he took command of the *Pegasus*, joining Nelson's squadron off Dominica. 'He has his foibles as well as private men, but they are overbalanced

by his virtues,' wrote Nelson to Captain Locker; 'in his professional line he is superior to near two-thirds, I am sure, of the list.' It seems a pity that this efficient sailor should not have been allowed to devote his whole life to the sea; but this was not to be, for on his creation as Duke of Clarence, with an income of £12,000 a year, his father considered that the time had come for him to settle down and adorn the social life of the country. He fulfilled only one more active engagement in the Navy: between 12th May and 27th November, 1790, he captained the *Valiant*. But this goes a long way towards disproving an extraordinary legend concerning his activities in that year which is still widely believed in Germany.

In 1880, the publication of a volume of correspondence found among the papers of Baron Reichenbach<sup>1</sup> caused a sensation in England. The book purports to contain several letters from Caroline von Linsingen to her son-in-law Herr Teubner, together with one letter written to her by Prince William, and has an introduction—the work of an anonymous editor—which claims that William and Caroline were duly married in 1791.

This marriage, if it ever took place, could have had no historical importance; for the Royal Marriage Act would have invalidated its consequences for England, and probably for Hanover. But the story, if we accepted it as true, would throw an interesting sidelight on the character of the Prince, whom no one had hitherto suspected of a strain of Wertherian sentiment. A perusal of the letters, however, leaves little doubt that they have been rather clumsily faked.

We are told that Caroline's father, General von Linsingen,

<sup>1</sup> *Caroline von Linsingen and William the Fourth. Unpublished love-letters discovered among the literary remains of Baron Reichenbach.* Translated by Theophilus G. Arundel (Sonnenschein & Allen).

was on terms of intimacy with the Grand Ducal House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz ; that William first met his daughter on April 13, 1790 ; and that ' it was not long before they learned to love one another passionately.' It is alleged that the marriage took place in August, 1791, but was not consummated until 1792, in which year Caroline miscarried of a child—and that soon afterwards, when the marriage became known to William's parents, the couple separated.

Apart from the fact that there is no evidence of William having been in Germany during these years, and that he was certainly at sea during most of the summer of 1790, when his amour is supposed to have been at its height, the chief argument against the genuineness of the correspondence is to be found in the letters themselves. The characters of the drama—apocryphal peers like William's ' best man,' ' Lord Dutton,' persons like ' Lady Hinxley,' and the clergyman (appropriately named Parsons) who is supposed to have united the couple—would not be out of place in the cast of one of Flotow's or Lortzing's operettas ; in this context they are unconvincing. Its style of high sentiment makes the whole story seem hysterical : a dizzy record of languishings and heart-burnings. Caroline's description of her wedding hardly inspires confidence :

*' William's responses were given in a clear and solemn tone, yet he trembled no less violently than myself. Indescribable were my feelings as, in the grey haze of morning (it was between five and six o'clock), I gave myself up to my beloved. Was it the sacred ceremony that kept me from perishing from my mingled anguish and bliss ? All onlookers wept with emotion.'*

Neither do these excerpts from William's letter to Caroline :

*' What were your words as I read that grand passage in Fordyce*

to you, which seemed so to carry you away? Did you not say that your love for me had fired you with a courage and a strength that nothing could overcome? . . . 'twas but two months ago that you fell down lifeless at the sudden sight of my portrait, that Dutton held before you . . . O wife, my wife, I am ever yours, never shall another call your William husband.'

There is no wish to discredit the memory of Caroline von Linsingen, who subsequently married a Dr. Meineke, and died at the early age of forty-five—and who goes down to history in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* as 'eine wegen ihrer wunderbaren Schicksale merkwürdige Frau.' But, as *The Times* commented in 1880, 'the solitary argument in favour of the authenticity of the letters is the *a priori* improbability that any writer casting about for the centre of a melodramatic love fable should have selected so exceedingly unpromising a hero for a tale of passion as good King William the Fourth.'

### III.

A keen sailor on board his ship has never lacked admiration; but the better the sailor, the more worthy of ridicule he often appears when stranded ashore. The Admiralty now treated all William's painstaking suggestions in naval affairs with complete contempt; and when war broke out with France his request for a commission was ignored. Unutterably weary of the life at Clarence Lodge, Richmond, he diverted himself with the society of a young lady called Polly Finch, to whom he read *The Lives of the Admirals* aloud. Glenbervie reports that Miss Finch 'bore this through one half of the work, but finding that as much remained, her patience sank under it, and a quarrel and separation ensued.'

Excellent material, this, for the cartoonists and pamphle-

teers ; they began to sharpen their pencils and keep an eye on the Duke. But, at the moment, his efforts to improve conditions in the Navy appealed to the general public ; and the following quotations from the popular song of ' Duke William's Ramble ' are not unfriendly. The author of the ' Ramble ' imagined that the Duke, while carousing ' incognito ' at a tavern on the outskirts of London, was seized by the Press Gang, hustled on board a warship, and, when he protested, ordered a flogging.

*' Then strip, they cry'd, the Duke reply'd,  
I do not like your laws, sir,  
I ne'er shall strip for to be whip't,  
So strip me if you dare, sir.*

*O then came down the boatswain's mate,  
The Duke for to undress, sir,  
But quickly he did espy  
The star upon his breast, sir,  
Then on their bended knees they fell,  
Yea and for mercy loud did call,  
The Duke replies you're villains all,  
For using thus poor seamen.*

*No wonder why my father he,  
Can't well man all his shipping,  
It's by your basely using them,  
And them always a whipping ;  
But for the future sailors all  
Shall have good usage great and small,  
They heard the news together all  
And cry'd God save Duke William.'*

This is hardly a respectful song ; but it certainly shows some recognition of courage and good intention, which is more than could have been accorded to William's brothers. His language and manners were often an embarrassment to

Society, but he brought back with him from his ten years at sea a kind of solid dependability, which did not desert him throughout his lifetime.

In March, 1790, William watched a young actress create the part of 'Little Pickle' in a play called *The Spoil'd Child* at Drury Lane. She was a great success with the audience, and an even greater success with the Duke. Indeed, so successful was she, that she lived with him for the next twenty years and bore him ten children.

The actress, who was called Mrs. Dorothy Jordan, was already the mother of five children: she was not, however, married, the 'Mrs.' having been added to obtain a legacy from a righteous aunt. Dorothy Jordan suffered under a moral reputation which was undeservedly bad. Her first child had been the result of an unhappy incident in Ireland with a blackguard named Daly ('the scene of which,' according to her biographer, Boaden, 'is still pointed out with strong *shudders* near Limerick'). Richard Ford, the father of the other children, had failed to honour his promise to marry her.

If her private life had been unfortunate, her public life was beyond praise. Few actresses have equalled, none excelled, the popularity of this generous and good-natured woman. She had not the advantage of great beauty. But, in the words of the critic of the *Morning Herald*, 'her face, if not beautiful, is said by some to be pretty, and by some pleasing, intelligent, or impressive.'

Above all, it was her laugh that was the joy of her admirers. The artificiality of stage laughter can be the reverse of charming, but hers was 'social and genuine.' 'It clips and tickles the dialogue,' said Leigh Hunt. 'It breaks in and about her words, like sparkles of bubbling water; and when the whole stream comes out nothing can be fuller of heart

and soul.' Although her reputation was made in rompish or 'breeches' parts, it was Lamb's opinion that these were outdone by her 'plaintive' rôles; there may have been justice in the lines of the contemporary poet,

*'Till Viola beautified the scene  
And Rosalind the bower;  
Thy blossoms, JORDAN, had we seen,  
But not thy fairest flower.'*

This, then, was the lady who bulked so largely in the life of Duke William of Clarence. The reader will excuse a touch of irony in the phrase: for it is true that we are told that her figure, 'always inclining to the en bon point,' eventually 'assumed a corpulency which did not assimilate with her theatrical avocations.'

#### IV.

*'Bachelor bluff, bachelor bluff,  
High for a heart that is rugged and tough!'*

It may be that Mrs. Jordan was reminded of this chorus (from one of her most popular songs, 'The Camp Medley') when she settled down to her life of 'blameless irregularity' with the Duke. Unfortunately the country as a whole seemed to have no use for bluffness or toughness; and even when William took up farming in Bushey Park, no call came to this Cincinnatus. Equally unsuccessful were his frequent speeches in the House of Lords, where a smug defence of the Slave Trade lost him a few friends. So far as progress was concerned, he had to content himself with a formal promotion to Vice-Admiral, to Admiral of the Blue, and finally to Admiral of the Fleet.

Mrs. Jordan, in the intervals of producing a brood of Fitzclarences, continued to work on the stage. Her

income was often useful to the Duke, who found it hard to support a growing family and pay off old debts at the same time. Their mode of living, with the exception of a sensational birthday party in 1806, was not extravagant ; Dorothy Jordan made an eminently practical housewife. Let us cite a paragraph from the biography of ' A Confidential Friend ' :

*' So unostentatious and truly domestic were the habits of Mrs. Jordan, after her new and exalted connection, that we have frequently witnessed her arrival, in a plain yellow chariot, at Miss Tuting's, a milliner in St. James's Street, where she would alight with an infant in her arms ; and during her stay, frequently change the linen of the little one in the shop, while freely conversing with the person in attendance to wait upon customers.'*

They were an affectionate couple ; loyalty was one of Mrs. Jordan's qualities ; she said that the Duke was ' an example to half the husbands and fathers in the world.' In 1809, after the battle of Talavera, in which one of her sons took part, she wrote to a friend : ' Five thousand killed !—the Duke at Brighton !—I went to bed, but not to sleep . . . The Duke set out at five o'clock on the Tuesday, to be the first to relieve me of my misery.'

This mutual interdependence makes their mysterious parting in 1811 the more puzzling. It is probable that the Duke's mother, Queen Charlotte, took advantage of one of her son's occasional quarrels with Mrs. Jordan about money matters, to urge him to reconsider the whole question of his finances and, if possible, to marry an heiress. The association of twenty years had held together on a basis of affection rather than of love ; nevertheless, the separation came as a severe blow to Mrs. Jordan. She admitted that she received ' most generous and liberal provision.' But her situation was that of the old woman who lived in a shoe,

and it was in straitened circumstances that she died at St. Cloud a few years later. (Only the generosity of English residents in Paris secured for her the tribute of a decent burial, and for the mourners a 'cold collation' after it.)

One would have thought that if anything could have stirred William's emotions it would have been the parting from, and subsequent death of, Mrs. Jordan; yet they seem to have had as little outward effect on him as a wooden spoon in the Christmas pudding. Following his mother's advice, he began to force his attentions on a series of rich young ladies. Among those who spurned his advances was Miss Tilney Long, and Peter Pindar records:

*'From W-nt-d, back to town he flew,  
Swift as four steeds could carry him,  
And in a devil of a stew,  
That Tiln-y would not marry him.'*

A similar lack of success attended his efforts with Princess Anne of Denmark. Here Peter Pindar pictures him as receiving the news with an optimism born of vanity:

*'His Royal Highness, who, God knows,  
Was ne'er deficient in invention,  
Most stoically blew his nose,  
And said with gracious condescension—*

*"If I have fail'd, as from your looks  
I may be borne out in implying,  
Make it no secret, man, adzooks!  
A thousand girls for me are sighing!"'*

The girls may well have sighed, but certainly it was not for love. William, despite repeated efforts, remained an unhappy bachelor, gallantly but clumsily attempting to educate his children and launch them into society. In 1817 his conventional asthma and gout were aggravated by an

upset stomach, possibly caused by over-indulgence in the fashionable vegetarian diet of Dr. Banyan. His mother was shocked at his appearance, when he answered her summons to Bath to take the waters, and finally decided that her son's marriage to a good, respectable wife was overdue : the result was the arrival at Grillon's Hotel, Albemarle Street, on a summer's evening of the following year, of the Princess Amelia Adelaide of Saxe Meiningen.

It is unlikely that William realised, as he clattered up to the hotel in his carriage a few hours later, that he was on the threshold of a life of quiet happiness such as he had never experienced before. The Princess Adelaide was not precisely beautiful, but she had qualities of tact and charm which enabled her to get on very well with those awkward 'step-children' of her husband, and a considerable common sense, which helped her to reform his financial affairs in a truly miraculous manner. After their marriage, life at Bushey was a calm well-ordered affair ; the Duke wandered through his greenhouses ; the Duchess plied her needle and thread ; and the guests admired the kitchen garden. Adelaide was well satisfied with a modest household, for she had known the reverse of comfort at home : Errol said that her old bedroom in the palace at Meiningen was 'a hole that an English housemaid would think it a hardship to sleep in.'

Two unfortunate incidents marred the eleven years that elapsed between the Duke's wedding and his unexpected accession to the throne. The first occurred during the trial of Queen Caroline in 1820, when the Duke, who was one of the Judges in his brother's cause, was accused of exerting personal influence among his fellow-Peers to induce them to vote for the Bill. 'Could I, my Lords, call on that individual,' thundered Denman, the Queen's Solicitor-General, as he pointed to the figure of the Duke in the gallery,

'I would say, "Come forth, thou foul slanderer, and meet me face to face!"'

The second, in 1828, concerned his resignation from the office of Lord High Admiral. After the death of the Duke of York in 1827, it was felt that the Duke of Clarence, as heir to the throne, should be given some dignified employment which would bring him into the public eye; Canning remembered his love of the sea, and revived for his benefit a post that had been in abeyance for a hundred years. But the Duke refused to serve only as an ornament; he had a disturbing habit of hoisting his official flag in the yacht *Royal Sovereign*, and sailing along the south coast to inspect the fleet without the required consent of the Admiralty; he also had ideas about promoting young officers, and pensioning the older men, which were far too sensible for Whitehall. His brother, the King, wrote to him: 'You are in error from beginning to end.' The Duke issued a final batch of promotions, and threw in his hand. 'I retire,' he said, 'with the most perfect satisfaction to my mind.'

'Altogether he seems a kind-hearted, well-meaning, not stupid, burlesque, bustling old fellow,' noted Greville, 'and if he doesn't go mad may make a very decent King.' William remained eccentric, but he did not go mad; for this blessing he had much to thank Queen Adelaide.

#### V.

When George IV died on June 26, 1830, Sir Henry Halford, hurrying to Bushey at seven in the morning, found the new King pottering about the garden in an old coat and beaver hat. Soon he dressed himself as an Admiral and drove up to town, vainly protesting that he wished to be known as Henry IX, and not as William IV. Apart from this little difficulty, he behaved very well until the time came

to sign the declaration before the Privy Council, when he exclaimed roundly: 'This is a damned bad pen you have given me!'—an incident which greatly shocked Mr. Creevey, but which we may be able to look upon with indulgence.

William's popularity increased daily; but he was still an uncrowned king when political events forced him into one of the least enviable situations ever endured by a British monarch. He has been held to blame for the long delay over the passing of the great Reform Bill of 1832; yet an unprejudiced reading of his correspondence gives the impression that it was largely owing to his honesty and common sense that it finally went through the Lords without an increase of the peerage—indeed, that it ever passed at all. The mob that smashed the Duke of Wellington's windows at Apsley House, smashed his Tory government as well; and though the people chanted with delight:

*' . . . our King has taken his own way, sir,  
And sent the black Duke to the swing, and  
substituted Grey, sir,'*

we know with what regret William parted from the Duke. With equal regret he parted from his own Tory convictions, as he slowly became persuaded of the necessity of reform. Between the King and Earl Grey, however, there grew up a mutual confidence, which was strengthened rather than weakened by Grey's discovery that William was not to be 'managed' as his brother had been.

Both King and Queen showed that they had minds of their own. William ordered an inexpensive Coronation: the expenses came to less than £30,000; the previous one had cost £240,000. But the Queen was obstinate in her refusal to have a hired crown, even though Greville reminded

her that George IV had worn one : ' I do not like it, and I have got jewels enough, so I will have them made up for myself,' she said. The King caused a little more trouble when he refused to be kissed by the bishops, and ordered that part of the Coronation service to be struck out ; but, on the remonstrations of the Archbishop, he eventually relented. The Coronation was a success. The crowds at Liverpool sung a revised version of the National Anthem, which went :

*' God save our Adelaide !  
Long on our flags display'd  
Be her name seen !'*

The Queen was popular with the country as a whole, and no doubt as a royal mother would have been still more so ; it was a lasting regret that her two daughters died in infancy. She made an excellent hostess. Miss Mary Clitherow, in one of her letters, describes a ball which was given for over five hundred guests at Kew : ' a seat for everyone, a napkin, three china plates, three silver forks, knife and spoon. The waiters had only to remove your plate . . . Weippert's beautiful band. I quite longed to dance . . . they had waltzes, quadrilles, gallopade, and reels.' (The only criticism was from the irrepressible Greville, who said that she was a prude because she would not let the ladies come *décolletées* to her parties.)

Other evenings, at St. James's, were less exciting ; they were usually spent in signing state papers. Often the King had to stop to put his hand in hot water. Once he turned to Miss Clitherow and said : ' My dear madame, when I began signing I had 48,000 signatures my poor brother should have signed. I did them all, but I made a determination never to lay my head on my pillow till I had signed every-

thing I ought on the day. It is cruel suffering, but, thank God! 'tis only cramp.'

Whenever they appeared in public, the royal couple were greeted with enthusiasm. Typical was a visit which they paid to Lewes at the beginning of their reign, when local societies (such as 'The Stag Club,' 'The Veterans,' and 'The Carpenters' Club') lined the streets, and 'the different bodies cheered after the manner of firing by platoons on field-days, while the dense crowd of the people maintained a general huzza.' They drove to 'The Friars, the residence of Nehemiah Wimble, Esquire, where an elegant *déjeuner à la fourchette* was provided at the expense of the borough.' It was a great day for Lewes: Mr. Mantell presented the King with his history of the town (2 vols., 4to); while the hospitable Mr. Wimble received an addition to his arms of a *Lion of England, borne in chief*.

In her public appearances the Queen introduced a note of informality which was rare among contemporary royalty: when she dined with the Clitherows at Brentford she stood for five minutes chatting with some haymakers in the garden, 'which gave the natives time to get her dress by heart—it was very simple, all white, little bonnet and feathers.'

As the years went on, the shadow of ill-health—torturing attacks of asthma, alarming fatigue—fell darkly across her husband's life. William lived as simply as ever. He rose at ten minutes to eight exactly, and made his breakfast of 'a dish of coffee and a couple of fingers'; then vanished behind the pages of *The Times* or the *Morning Post*, whence came muttered comments on the affairs of the moment, listeners hearing 'That's a damned lie' and other intriguing remarks. All through the morning he worked with his secretary; at two o'clock he lunched off a couple of cutlets

and two glasses of sherry. Afterwards came a drive till dinner-time ; and at eleven he retired to bed. 'He is in dreadfully low spirits,' said Adolphus Fitzclarence, 'and cannot rally at all.'

When, in May, 1837, his last illness came upon him, he refused with his usual obstinacy to stay in bed ; he even insisted on getting up an hour earlier than usual. 'I feel it my duty to keep well as long as I can,' he told the Queen. An effort was made to take him down to Brighton, but his swollen legs and difficult breathing rendered this impossible.

On the 18th of June he was dying ; but he had not forgotten the anniversary of Waterloo. 'Let me live over this memorable day,' he said to the doctor—'I shall never live to see another sunset.' From the Archbishop of Canterbury he received the Communion, and waved good-bye to him from his bed with 'God bless you—a thousand, thousand thanks !' Two days later his last words were spoken to him : 'Believe me, I am a religious man.'

So passed a 'Sailor King,' who made no great mark on English history. The death-bed at Windsor is less vivid in our minds than the image of the young Princess, in her dressing-gown, who first received the news of it.

But, when we survey his life, we may choose to overlook the moral lapses, the eccentricities ; and rather to remember the tribute of Earl Grey, that 'one more sincerely devoted to the interest of his country, more attentive to his duty upon every occasion, there never did exist.' This should not blind us to the deficiencies of the man who could welcome a new Bishop with the words : 'My Lord, I do not mean to interfere in any way with your vote in Parliament except on one subject, the Jews, and I trust I may depend on your always voting against them.'

## THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

BY CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUSE.<sup>1</sup>

THE burning of the Crystal Palace on November the 30th of last year was more than a mere pyrotechnical display, but something less than an architectural disaster. The building was a noble one, and its history was full of interest : but few were its visitors, and the atmosphere was one of difficulty and decay, while a third of the building had been burnt already, seventy years earlier, leaving a lop-sided remnant. And yet, to those whose curiosity could drag them all the way to Sydenham, it was a strange excitement to survey that vast and lovely palace, the pride and delight of a whole generation of Victorians.

In the year 1850, the protagonists of the forthcoming International Exhibition, of whom Prince Albert was by no means the most active, were confronted with the problem of housing a display of quite unprecedented size in a building which had to be temporary because it was to occupy the sacred soil of Hyde Park. Their difficulties in this respect become more painful as the time drew nearer. A Building Committee, on which Barry and Brunel represented the best of contemporary architecture and engineering, proved unable to cope with the problem. A public competition elicited 245 entries, of which not one was found worthy of adoption : so that the Committee was compelled to produce

<sup>1</sup> An account of the building of the Crystal Palace and its subsequent history is given by the same author in his book *1851 and the Great Exhibition* which has just been published. It is fully illustrated from contemporary engravings.

a design of its own. This proved to be a gigantic erection of brick, eighteen acres large, crowned by a vast dome of sheet iron. But though its authors, of whom Brunel was the principal, were men of great distinction and experience, this scheme had several grave defects: it could never be built in the time, it was perfectly hideous, it was ruinously expensive, and it would be almost impossible to demolish. The public in general, and the Protectionists in particular, to whom the whole idea of the Exhibition was abhorrent, seized upon the faults of the building as an excuse to agitate against the project; Prince Albert himself despaired of carrying it through; when, at an interview between a Mr. Joseph Paxton and a Mr. Henry Cole, the solution of the difficulty was put forward and unofficially accepted.

Cole and Paxton were two types of all that was best in the nineteenth century. Cole was a civil servant, artist, writer and critic, and the true originator of this as of many other exhibitions. Paxton was a gardener who had risen in the service of the Duke of Devonshire to the positions of an agent, architect, engineer, railway director, financier and newspaper proprietor. Among his innumerable successes were two important ferrovitreous buildings—the Great Conservatory at Chatsworth, an acre in extent and of great height, and the Lily House, built to accommodate his horticultural masterpiece, the Victoria Regia lily. It was just after the completion of the latter that he turned his mind to the controversy over the Hyde Park building.

There had been many earlier glass buildings. Glass was an expensive material, subject till 1845 to a heavy excise, and manufactured in smallish sizes, for the most part by foreign workmen. Paxton himself had forced the manufacturers to make it larger for his Conservatory. It had been used to some extent in the new railway stations. The

firm of Turner's, of Dublin, had built many conservatories, of which the chief was Decimus Burton's Palm House at Kew : they had even submitted a design in glass for the Building Committee's competition. But Paxton's scheme was unique in more respects than one. Adopting an eight-foot unit grouped in threes, he built it up into an illimitable series of galleries, tiers, courts and avenues, all repeating the same filling of glass and the same tenuous structure of slight columns and girders. Each bay was the same as its neighbour, each storey repeated the one below. There was no display of strength, no seeming of stress, and not an inch of wasted space. But the most revolutionary feature of all was that by the simplification of units and the pre-fabrication of great quantities, and by their adaptable nature, the contractors were able to undertake to finish the whole (optimistically as it turned out) in five months, and at a net cost, assuming that they took the materials, of only £79,800.

Paxton's design was originally sketched on a blotter in a board-room at Derby : it was finished in a week in the offices at Chatsworth : it was foisted upon the authorities in a fortnight : and three weeks later it was being staked out. Grave fears were entertained in some quarters for the safety of so flimsy a building, and various cranks and disappointed rivals drew attention to the peril of fires, gales, hailstorms, and above all the peril of a great influx of visitors. But the building was to falsify every prophecy. Though it looked so slight, it was to stand like a rock against every storm, and to accommodate crowds of as many as 100,000 persons in safety. On the other hand, though it looked almost fireproof, it was actually a mass of combustible material, and constituted by its very shape a natural flue for any wind which blew, as that of November the 30th chanced

to do, from the right quarter. Paxton well knew this danger, and took elaborate precautions against it.

The success of the finished building was complete. London gloried in its 'Crystal Palace': six millions passed through its doors. From old copies of the *Illustrated London News* we can recapture a glimpse of its fresh beauty, set down by careful engravers, seen by moonlight across the Serpentine. Myriads of flags waved from its roof: inside it was glowing with warmth and variety: outside its new and brightly coloured paint and its glass all washed by showers glittered and shone all that glorious summer. Most of the visitors declared that none of the wonders in the exhibition could approach the wonder of the edifice itself. The British public, when they heard the story of Sir Joseph Paxton (as he now became), acclaimed him as a hero, a representative embodiment of all that the age admired.

It was primarily due to Prince Albert that the Crystal Palace was banished from Hyde Park. Paxton formed a company to acquire it, and purchased the magnificent site at Sydenham, visualising a great centre where education and decorous amusement would walk hand in hand. Happiness and enlightenment would be shed upon the masses: while scope would be given at the same time to his (Paxton's) own genius for landscape gardening and display. Unfortunately, his ideas were now so princely as to border upon megalomania. The palace itself was approximately doubled in size in the course of re-erection: the grounds were laid out with a total disregard to expense. One of Paxton's weaknesses was for fountains: to support the prodigious system of fountains that was to play on the top terraces of this elevated site, he employed Brunel to build the two water-towers, containing over 350,000 gallons of water.

During the years following its reopening by Queen Vic-

toria in 1854, the Crystal Palace did succeed in filling the part for which it was intended. The Company was given a Charter, which enjoined it to maintain a high moral and educational tone. Experts in architecture and archæology were given a free hand with the interior. A huge collection of reproductions of statuary was brought together. Rare animals and plants thrived in the warmth and radiance of the atmosphere. In 1859, the first of the triennial Handel festivals took place : and at other concerts an orchestra of 2,000 and a choir of 4,000 were brought under one conductor. Temperance and religious bodies held their festivals here : Spurgeon preached to nearly 24,000 listeners. Blondin walked the tight-rope between the towers and across the transept : Brock's fireworks annually surpassed themselves. There were royal visits by Napoleon and Eugénie, the Tsar, the Sultan, the Khedive, the Shah, and the Kaiser. Until quite late in the century, the Palace ranked with Westminster Abbey and the other regular sights of London.

But the Company never paid its way. Paxton had saddled it with an insupportable burden both of capital outlay and of maintenance expenses. In 1866, the north wing and transept were destroyed by fire : and since neither the public nor the shareholders would put up sufficient money to replace it, the building was permanently truncated ever since. In 1880, one of the water-tanks burst. The grounds began to run to seed. The fountains ceased to play, the cement crumbled, the plaster peeled. A generation arose, in the footsteps of Mr. Pooter, to whom fast trains and the non-observance of Sundays made Brighton or Southend as accessible as Sydenham had been. The directors lost heart. A receiver was appointed : the Court ordered the property to be sold for a sixth of what it had cost. It was bought by the Earl of Plymouth : and after

two years of appeals in *The Times*, a Lord Mayor's Fund took it off his hands and made it over to the nation. This was in 1913. During the War, it was a training ship. In 1920, it reopened as the Imperial War Museum. Since then, a succession of shows of dogs, cats, babies and poultry, of revivalist meetings and brass band competitions, maintained it in a state of miraculous solvency. The able management of Sir Henry Buckland attracted something like a million visitors a year to these special occasions: and the trustees were even enabled to undertake certain works of restoration. But few people went to see the building for its own sake. Between whiles, it was empty and untidy. The contents were of a marvellous incongruity. Each successive exhibition seemed to have left a little of its more useless jetsam behind. There were many relics of 1851, and the hand of Paxton showed itself in innumerable places. But the air was one of utter desolation, of immense space unnoticed and untended, of cafés that did not cater and taps that did not turn.

The beauty of the building derived mostly from its size: the detail was a plain and inoffensive Victorian pattern, but its endless repetition, tier upon tier, bay after bay, produced an extraordinary lightness and grace. Dating from the very heyday of frills, it was quite free of frills itself. The central transept was composed of the same units as the wings: the lowest storey was no more emphatic than the topmost. All its effect, all its emphasis, depended on the vast spaces of light and shadow which the walls themselves enclosed without the least attempt at self-assertion.

Perhaps it would not be too much to call it a work of genius. Paxton was not an artist: all he did was to devise his engineering unit and to cover his given space with it. But in doing so he taught a lesson which was ignored for

fifty years and more. He left his building to speak for itself, in an age when buildings ranted and roared. A later generation found his work refreshing, and proclaimed it as a historic episode in architecture. A few pilgrims embarked on interminable bus-rides to the new-found shrine. But the colossal marble bust of Paxton looked down on them with mild amusement. Let them admire his handiwork, he must have thought : but at least let them learn his lesson accurately. The Crystal Palace was at least symmetrical. Paxton did not avail himself of the ferrovitreous technique to poise great masses upon vacant space, to leave the corners of his building without visible support, or to tattle about with awkward and arbitrary dispositions of voids. His building was sane and straightforward by comparison with those of his contemporaries : by comparison with those of his present-day admirers, it was still more sane and still more straightforward.

## COMING TO TEA.

BY L. A. G. STRONG.

HE met her on the doorstep. The girl's face changed to surprise at the sight of him.

'I saw you from the window,' he said. 'Did she—did she ask you to tea?'

'Yes. Have I come on the wrong day, or something?'

'No. No. No. I didn't know you were coming. I could have sent you a message—wired, or telephoned. But I didn't know.'

Then, seeing the perplexity in her face, he cried, 'My dear—she's dead.'

'Dead!' The girl recoiled a step. 'But . . . I didn't even know she was ill.'

'She wasn't. At least . . . It was very sudden. They rang me up at the Museum, but I wasn't there. It was some time before they got me. I came at once, of course. She was still alive, but unconscious. She passed away peacefully. Her breathing just got fainter and fainter and——' He finished with a little forlorn gesture.

'I'm most terribly sorry.' Sincerity rang in the girl's voice. The colour flooded back to her face. 'I——'

'No. Don't go.' He put out a hand as if to clutch at her. 'Stay and have tea with me. Please. I'm all alone. Esther's away on a cruise. She doesn't know, of course. She won't know. In fact,' he stared at her with a half-shocked expression, 'she won't even be here for the funeral.'

The girl stood, unhappy, undecided. He came down a step and stood beside her.

'Please come in. I haven't seen anyone, except the doctor and the landlady. Mr. Finch—he's her solicitor, you know—he can't come. Not till to-morrow. But he's making all the—the arrangements.' He looked earnestly into her face. 'Do come in. They are just going to bring in tea.'

Turning from her, without waiting for an answer, he hurried up the steps, clicking his fingers. With an embarrassed little grimace, she followed him.

He plunged in at the open door of the sitting-room, recollected himself, came out again, and stood to usher her in.

'In here,' he muttered.

Her manner was stiff and awkward. She knew him quite well, of course. He had been there several times, with his mother, and once they had dined and gone to a cinema together: but she had never been with him alone. And, for the moment, she did not want to be with anybody. She wanted to go away quietly somewhere, by herself, and try to digest the news.

'Won't you sit down?'

'Thank you.'

To compose herself, she looked around the familiar room. Every object reflected the quiet personality of the little old lady who had owned it. The high-backed rocking-chair by the fireplace, with the grey Shetland shawl folded neatly across its back; the old Irish praying-chair, with its sconces, drawn up to the oddly carved writing-table in the window; the silver-covered blotter, the ivory-handled pen with the J nib, the squat solid cut-glass inkpot, which rested upon it; everything was as it had been on countless visits she had paid before.

Mr. George stood, clicking his fingers. She looked at him. He started, as if in self-reproach.

'To be sure,' he said. 'I'm forgetting.'

He went over and rang the bell. An awkward silence followed, broken at last by the maid's footsteps on the tiled hallway.

'One more cup, please, Elsie. And some more bread and butter.'

The maid looked reproachfully at him, and even more reproachfully at the girl; compressed her lips; and withdrew. There was another silence.

The girl sat, her hot fingers nervously entwined.

'I can hardly believe it,' she said. 'I shall miss her most frightfully. No——' She made an impulsive movement towards him. 'That was a terribly selfish thing to say, when you——'

'No, no, no. Go on. I like to hear you.'

The words would not come. She swallowed, and sketched a helpless gesture. He was looking at her, nodding, with an odd enthusiasm.

'Isn't it a grand thing,' he blurted out, 'when an old lady and a young girl are such friends? She thought the whole world of you. Oh, yes, she did. Many's the time she's said to me, "I've got Joan coming to tea. We're such friends. She makes me feel young again."'

'Don't!' The girl clasped her hands tightly together.

He continued, unheeding, '"She confides in me so. She tells me all her troubles, and all the troubles of the family at home."'

'I did, indeed.' She looked up at him earnestly. 'And it wasn't like confiding in an old person at all. She was so young in mind. She'd been through such a lot, and yet she could always remember what it felt like to be young.'

'She had been through a lot, as you say. Indeed she had.' He sighed, and fingered his chin. His finger made

a rasping noise, and she saw that he was badly shaven, in patches.

'A terrible lot, she had been through,' he repeated, but, even as he was speaking, the breath went out of his voice, and his look became vague again. He sighed, and began wandering about the room.

Then the high heels once more clicked in the hall, and Elsie, still reproachful, brought in the extra tea-things. He waited, till she went: sighed again: fumbled abstractedly with teapot and cups for a moment, and put them down. The girl waited, then, after a glance at his face, quietly possessed herself of the teapot, and poured out for them both.

He gave a start of surprise. 'Thank you. Oh, thank you. No, thanks. I don't want anything to eat.'

'You must,' she said quietly. 'You'll have such a lot to see to. You must take care of yourself.'

He picked up a piece of bread and butter, folded it over, raised it half-way to his lips, and set it down. 'You're right,' he said. 'She did go through a lot.' Then, as if he had made up his mind, he turned to her abruptly. 'You know her story, don't you?'

'I think so,' she murmured. 'Some of it, at least.'

'She's told you about her home, I expect. For that matter, there are the photographs of it.' He swung a hand vaguely towards the wall. 'Well, her maiden name was Donovan, and her father was a general—that's him, on the right of the mantelpiece; and they lived in a lovely old house called Bohanestown, some miles from Dublin. They entertained a great deal, and moved in the best society. Then, when she was over on a visit in London, she met my father. He was a man of good family, but, through no fault of his own, he was in a very subordinate position.

His father had died when he was only a boy, leaving him with a mother and a sister to support : and he had to take the first work he could get.

'Well—when my mother announced that she was going to marry him, there was the most terrible scene. You can't imagine the snobbery of a good Irish Protestant family of that time. Simply can't imagine it. The general raved and swore, and ordered her to give father up. Mother—can you imagine her giving anyone up?—did her best to make the old man see reason, for she loved him too, and he adored her. But he would not. So they made a runaway match of it. The old man was beside himself with fury. He never forgave them.

'So mother had to come over here, and live in a poky little house in the suburbs, and be poor, and cook, and scrub, and mend, and do her own washing and ironing—she who had always had maids and the best of everything. And, worst of all, she had to put up with being looked down upon by people she would never even have heard of at home. But she never complained. She won through. And—you know all she did for us.'

The girl nodded. He picked up his teacup, and put it down very carefully on the edge of the table. The girl watched it in an agony, afraid he would knock it off.

'She had to watch every penny. Funny folk. Even after father died, they never really forgave her. Eh?'

'Your cup—'

'My cup? Oh yes. Thank you.' He moved it.

'She was marvellous to me,' the girl began in a low tone; but he stood up, interrupting her.

'Will you come in and see her?'

She fought with a momentary fear, then, ashamed, since he so plainly wanted her to come, she nodded.

They went together into the square high bedroom, hushed and close with the indefinable stuffiness of death. He crossed to a window and pulled up a blind. A beam of light pierced the yellow gloom, and fell straight upon the face of the little old lady on the bed.

The girl caught her breath. The face and body had a stillness that was not the aggressive stillness of so many corpses, but was all peace. Thirty years had been smoothed from the face. It was serene, smooth as water at dawn, and there was at the corners of the mouth the lightest hint of a smile, just as though she had fallen asleep dreaming of Bohanestown, as it was in the days of her youth, hearing voices and laughter from the croquet lawn, and the bark of her old spaniel Skip as he frolicked and gambolled round her feet, delighted to escape into the green garden after the rain. Yet, if she had fallen asleep dreaming of such things, she was not dreaming of them now. The peace of the face was beyond that. Happiness and unhappiness were nothing to it any more. Remote, ineffable, its peace reproved the pity which the girl had brought. It was she, with her sorrows and joys before her, who was to be pitied: she, and the bereaved man at her side.

She turned, and saw him, forlorn, bewildered, his hair greying at the temples, standing there fingering his chin, a lost middle-aged man, deprived of his guide and comforter. His mother had been everything to him. He would not know what to do now that she was gone.

Seeing him so forlorn, all the emotion dammed up in the girl broke loose. Suddenly, she put an arm round him, pulled him to her, and kissed him. Then, without a word, she rushed out of the room, across the hall, and down the steps, the glare and green of the street a dazzle before her swimming eyes.

## FOREST EVENING.

*To-day in the heart of the forest  
I have heard the wild bird's song,  
And the noise of the crickets crying  
In the bracken all day long :*

*To-day in the heart of the forest  
I have seen the young hawk's flight,  
The curve of his long swift swooping,  
The flash of his wings in the light :*

*I have seen the butterflies chasing  
On the drift of the careless breeze,  
The bright-eyed squirrels leaping,  
The lazy run of the bees :*

*I have seen the high sun streaming  
In green and gold on the leaves,  
The diamond's glint and sparkle  
On the web that midnight weaves :*

*I have known all things that are joyful,  
That are wild and fresh and free,  
All things most young, most lovely,  
Most glorious to see.*

*I have walked all day in the forest,  
I am dusty and tired and sore—  
And the voices I heard in the sunlight,  
I hear them now no more :*

*And the things that I saw in the forest,  
The lights and the shades and the dews,  
The birds, the beasts and the flowers,  
The dragonfly's myriad hues,*

*They are gone from the glades, they are sleeping  
Where even the wind is still,  
Where the mist of the sweet pale evening  
Creeps with a gathering chill.*

*And now from the margin of shadows  
The young moon wanders high,  
And the scents that blow in the forest  
Rise to the primrose sky :*

*And the dim white road goes winding  
Past meadow and farm and pond,  
Right through the heart of the forest  
Over the heath beyond :*

*And the only sounds of the forest  
Are the owl's and the nightjar's song—  
But the crickets will still be crying  
In the bracken all night long.*

*Julian Tennyson.*

*BY THE WAY.*

WHO has not, at some time or other in their lives, played the game, fascinating but tantalising, of thinking themselves someone—or something—other than the human beings they are? Usually, after dwelling pleasurably for a while upon the power or luxury or freedom we should enjoy in a changed existence, we come back at last to a resigned, if not a complacent, contemplation of our own individualities, which we would not in actual fact exchange with those of any other persons. And yet, when weighed with certain thoughts, what a relief it would be to escape altogether from the burdens, the follies, and the crimes of humanity! Consider, for example, the possibilities that are in a robin. I feel perfectly certain that robins are never ashamed: we have only to look at one to be convinced of that—but we humans are, or ought to be, often. Recently I chanced to listen to a talk on the wireless during the children's hour: the speaker was telling his unseen listeners of the Koala, that harmless, amusing little tree-bear of Australia; he described the Koala in its hundreds of thousands, unmolested by the aborigines—until the coming of civilised man: that miscalled creature discovered that he could get 6*d.* a skin for Koalas, and now they are rarities, even in Queensland. A few days later I sat at a public function by a man who has a deservedly distinguished name for his work in connection with the welfare of the inhabitants of this London of ours, the home, as we who belong to it like to think, of all that is best in the world: he asked me whether I had studied the latest methods of making an ordinary room secure from an enemy gas

attack ; had I thought, for instance, of pasting paper over the keyhole ? A mad world, my masters, a world of which humanity has much, very much, to be deeply ashamed. There is, in sober truth, a good deal to be said for preferring to-day to be a robin.

\*     \*     \*

In various ages there have been various ways in which men and women of much wealth and restless ambition have sought to exercise influence over their fellows. It has been given to those of this century to pursue that aim by the purchase of newspapers, and singular have been some of the adventures. The most recent, and perhaps the most singular, was the transmogrification of the *Saturday Review* : it had had a past of merit and respectability ; suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, or rather between one weekend and another, it blossomed forth—if that be the appropriate expression—into an hysterical vehemence that has had few parallels in modern English journalism. It was amusing, no doubt, whilst it lasted, and very possibly good as a remedy against quietude—and yet I am inclined to think most people are not altogether sorry to have it again voicing opinion soberly and with restraint. There is a tale I remember once being told of a certain famous journal which on one occasion had a leading article expressing views very divergent from the expected : the next day its leading article returned to its normal line, opening with the words ‘ the night has brought reflection.’ ‘ What the night had really brought,’ ended the narrator dryly, ‘ was the proprietor down in a fury.’ It is strange occasionally to reflect upon the moulding of public opinion and the chances that beset it : the one real consolation is that in this country people for the most part obstinately refuse to think as they are bidden, and indeed often prefer

to read, in place of an echo of their own opinions, that with which they emphatically disagree.

\* \* \*

My small son, aged  $5\frac{1}{2}$ , and I were talking—at least he was ; he was telling me all about his political plans. He had begun by asking me what would happen if he slapped a policeman and was lamentably unimpressed by my answer—he would soon break out of prison, he would get together an army and ‘bang people against the railings’ ; Peter (his crony, aged  $4\frac{3}{4}$ ) would help—though Peter was not very brave. The conversation proceeded :

Boy : ‘ *I shall have lots of soldiers and policemen, and we’ll fight everybody.*’

Father : ‘ *They won’t fight just because you tell them to.*’

Boy : ‘ *But I shall be the king : they’ll have to.*’

Father (sententiously) : ‘ *In the olden days the king could just tell them : he can’t quite do that now.*’

Boy : ‘ *Oh, but he will be able to again when I’m king !*’

Thus early do our children pass from Bolshevism to dictatorship !

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Recent weeks have been rich in autobiographies, a curious form of literature. Three autobiographies of writers lie before me, each as different, one from the other, as their authors. There is, first of all, Kipling’s, entitled with truth and simplicity *Something of myself : for my friends known and unknown* (Macmillan, 7s. 6d. n.). There have been few literary phenomena like Rudyard Kipling, world-famous whilst still in his twenties : the only comparable figure in this respect that I can think of is Charles Dickens. In everything Kipling wrote, in his less good moments as in his great, there is something curiously compelling, often beyond analysis or other explanation than lies in the vivid, tremendous

personality behind the words—and so it is in this book. It is incomplete, even as Kipling's life somehow was ; it ends much too soon, even as his greatest creative period did—but it holds the reader irresistibly from the first page to the last. It leaves much unsaid ; but the biographer of a vast influence, when he arises, will have to take it all most fully into account.

Then, next, comes J. B. Priestley's, rather fancifully entitled *Midnight on the Desert : a chapter of autobiography* (Heinemann, 8s. 6d. n.). My real complaint about this is that I took it up thinking that it would be all, or at any rate mostly, about J. B. Priestley, and it is very different from the expected. It is Mr. Priestley, sitting in his hut in Arizona, beside his stove, pipe in mouth, chatting. He chats to his reader just as he would to a friend, not about himself—or only indirectly and partially—but about his recent experiences in, and impressions of, certain parts and places of the United States, New York, California, Arizona and the rest. Mr. Priestley is so immensely interested in everything around him—in this at least having a kinship with Arnold Bennett—that he conveys this interest, even in matters that are quite unimportant in themselves, to his reader. And he is unfailingly modest and good-humoured. But he can write a vastly greater book than this ; he can probe much deeper into the heart of the modern world : here he remains, definitely and deliberately, upon the surface—and that, to my mind, for a man of his gifts is a pity.

The third is Frank Swinnerton's, and this is entitled with an almost superb brevity *Swinnerton : An Autobiography* (Hutchinson, 10s. 6d. n.) ; but then that is just what it is not. On page 365 he says, 'it was never my intention to pass in review, as if they were a household regiment, all the authors of the present era,' but that is what his book in fact does.

All the authors he has met—and though there are some very conspicuous absentees (his two fellow autobiographers, Kipling and Priestley, for instance, and there are many others) he has met a very great many—are passed in these pages in review, hardly, however, so much in the rôle of authors as in that of jolly fellows. Unlike many who record their impressions of their comrades or acquaintances, Mr. Swinerton has a good word for everybody and in consequence his roving reminiscences are pleasant reading: he even forbears to complain of me for anticipating by a few weeks a title for a book he had selected for one of his own—and if that is not forbearance I do not know what is. But I could not help wishing he had told his readers a little less about the appearance, the personal idiosyncrasies, and the popularity of his very large company of friends and more about their minds and the works for which they are noted. But still one cannot have everything—even in an autobiography.

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Two other autobiographies call for attention, if only to establish the vast variety of human lives, each utterly different not only from one another but from each of the three literary autobiographies above mentioned. One is J. H. Thomas's *My Story* (Hutchinson, 15s. n.), which, being the life-story told by himself of a very remarkable man, is inevitably interesting, though hardly literary. It is, in fact, almost painfully disjointed, and those who look for the much-heralded 'secrets' will perhaps be almost as disappointed as those who hope for a fund of good stories. These are few: by far the best are two in quick succession of Mr. Lloyd George. But throughout there is little humour: instead we have an all-pervading atmosphere of vehement and aggrieved self-defence which is possibly natural and yet is inimical to a reader's enjoyment. Mr. Thomas has been

a much greater figure in our national life than will be readily gathered from these troubled pages.

The second is in every respect a contrast—a rollicking experience of life in the Army in India and at home as a *Colonel's Lady* (Bell, 7s. 6d. n.), told by Leonora Starr, whose work is not unknown to readers of CORNHILL. Here is no gallery of distinguished folk, merely a simple, humorous, and courageous chronicle, all narrated in the spirit of its admirable opening: 'Having at the age of twenty-three acquired a satisfactory husband and two lusty sons, and the younger of these being a year old, it seemed to me that the time was ripe for further adventure. Whether to write a book or have a daughter I had not quite made up my mind —' Readers will be grateful that owing to the intervention of the War Office the decision was in favour of the former.

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And biographies, three of them, each again as completely different as the lives of which they treat. I opened *Grey of Fallodon* (Longmans, 16s. n.) by Professor G. M. Trevelyan with very high expectation; the life of a very great Englishman written by one whom I have long thought our greatest living historian ought to be something peculiarly notable. Perhaps I expected too much: to convey successfully in a single volume not only so dual a personality but also, and of necessity, an account of the world events with which he wrestled is more, doubtless, than could reasonably be asked even of Professor Trevelyan. At all events, I laid the volume down at length, slightly disappointed. It has an oddly in and out chronology; it has some repetitions which bear upon them all the marks of hasty compilation; but it is of course deeply interesting, and nowhere more so than in its beautifully restrained references to Mr. Lloyd George's memory. The summing up is perhaps true of both of the

biography and the biographer. 'Where he failed no one could have succeeded; where he succeeded many would have failed.'

Little, however, really needs to be added about Paul Kruger: in *The Pace of the Ox* (Constable, 10s. 6d. n.) Marjorie Juta has given fully and with remarkable vigour the life story of the indomitable figure that so many of us who can recall the hectic months of the South African war thought of as 'slim.' That he never was: in youth a tremendously vigorous, splendid specimen of manhood, in age a stubborn, and even grim, figure, Life did not deal gently with 'Oom Paul'; and it is only of recent times when the bitterness is past that his full stature as a patriot, even if of limited vision, can be recognised. This biography lacks in dispassionate criticism, but it atones in graphic power.

Thirdly, Milton Waldman, who has already shown his gifts as a historian—most recently in his admirable *Elizabeth*—deals vividly with as vivid and capricious a set of people as has ever strutted on the stage of a nation's affairs, Catherine de Medici and her seven children, in his new book *Biography of a Family* (Longmans, 16s. n.). It is, of course, undeniable that the subjects and the period lend themselves to a capable biographer almost as though they had existed for no other purpose: even a dull one could hardly make them uninteresting, but Mr. Waldman is more than capable and never dull. This is a book which it does not need a historian to enjoy; it is an immensely vivacious record of a family who really, difficult as it is in this age to believe, 'once actually lived' and conducted their lives as herein depicted. Grey of Fallodon had world cataclysm with which to cope, but he was at least spared the combination of Valois, Bourbon, Guise, Montmorency, Châtillon, and Lorraine.

G.

## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 162.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach the Editor by 30th April.

'Now that ——'s ——.'

1. 'That all thy motions gently pass  
—— a plane of molten glass,'
2. 'No star of all heaven sends to light our —— to the  
tomb.'
3. 'By sweet enforcement and —— dear,'
4. 'Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;  
Nor harken what the —— spirit sings,'
5. '—— a cloud of fire ;  
The blue deep thou wingest.'

Answer to Acrostic 160, February number : 'Nor *lowly* hedge nor solitary thorn : ' (Thomas Hood : 'Autumn'). 1. *Lh*out*H* ('loweth,' Cuckoo Song, Old English). 2. *OnE* (Wordsworth : 'The Trosachs'). 3. *Wou*l*D* (Thomas Otway : 'The Enchantment'). 4. *LonG* (Coleridge : 'Kubla Khan'). 5. *YE* (Wordsworth : 'Ode on Intimation of Immortality').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. Claydon, The School House, Sittingbourne, and Major L. C. Sargent, Manor Cottage, Westbury, Northants, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

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